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THE STRUGGLE FOR NORTH AFRICA

DYING unwept, Darlan has left in French North Africa a political cesspool whose stench not merely infects the cause of the Western Allies but threatens, unless there be plain speaking and better understanding, to poison Anglo-American relations. Mistakenly cautious American censorship in Algiers emasculates correspondents' comments about a set-up on which a British, no less than an American, army depends. In the London press there has been scarcely a hint of friction between Whitehall and White House. Disconnected reports—Darlan's executioner was a member of a gang whose intended victims included General Giraud and President Roosevelt's envoy, Mr. Murphy; General de Gaulle's visit to Washington is unwelcome and cancelled; the Allies' sympathisers in North Africa are still in concentration camps; French Colonial troops are fighting gallantly in Tunisia; General de Gaulle declares that the worsening situation menaces Allied security—such is the curious patch-work of censored news on which the British public, disquieted by the absence of military success in Tunisia, has to form judgment on developments behind the front. What men of good will on both sides of the Atlantic want is indisputable. They want to see French North Africa becoming a secure base for Allied operations, our helpers there requited, all anti-Fascists liberated, and all Vichyist collaborationists and Axis agents given short shrift. In addition, they want to see all elements of fighting France united in a single struggle for victory. That alone makes sense. Yet though the British press is significantly reticent on this embarrassing subject, in Washington Anglo-American "disagreement" is being clamorously discussed in nation-wide radio hook-ups. It is, therefore, of some importance that the British public should know whether there is real disagreement, what it is all about, and what is the standpoint of the United States, or at least of the State Department in Washington.

Broadcasting on New Year's Eve, a Washington commentator, whose talk was suggestive of official inspiration, put the State Department's case frankly and, within limits, objectively. Britain, he said, regards General de Gaulle as her white-headed boy and backs the General's National Committee in London. Though British policy may be at one with American in desiring that eventually a liberated France should freely choose its own form of Government within the terms of the Atlantic Charter, Downing Street sees in de Gaulle and his Committee the one acceptable provisional Government of the liberated portions of the French Empire *ad interim*. Washington demurs. Any provisional Government must necessarily influence the freedom with which the French people will elect a final post-war regime. To install such a Government would therefore be to prejudice French sovereign liberty. What right have the Allies to take such a step? Why not accept in French North Africa the political *status quo*, and concentrate solely on securing such military co-operation as is required—and is being vouchsafed by General Giraud—for the Tunisian campaign?

This is specious pleading. That "influence" is likely to be exercised by provisional Governments is incontestable. But can the Allies disclaim responsibility by pretending that no provisional Government exists, with Allied recognition, in North Africa? The personal integrity of the new High Commissioner, General Giraud, is not disputed. By inclination of the Right, he is by common consent an honest soldier whose allegiance to the Republic is undoubted. But though President Roosevelt, contravening the State Department's convenient doctrine of political non-intervention, would doubtless have ordered General Eisenhower to veto the appointment of any other candidate, General Giraud was, in fact, elected High Commissioner by Darlan's Imperial Council. In other words, he was chosen by the Vichyist Residents and Governors-General for whose regime Giraud is now responsible. It is a regime to which General Eisenhower, in a territory which relies for its external protection on Allied bayonets, is allowing a remarkable latitude. It remains free to retain in high office M. Chatel, the notoriously pro-German Governor-General of Algeria; to maintain in their appointments the unreliable Pétainist officers who form the majority of the senior ranks serving under General Juin (a Commander-in-Chief who, at best, is described as an avowed Vichyist) to leave unsuppressed the S.O.L. and other Fascist paramilitary organisations which infest Vichyist North Africa; to turn a blind eye to the activities of Axis agents; to hold still in concentration camps in the Sahara thousands of International Brigaders and de Gaullists whom the Allies (so one supposed) came to rescue; and to maintain in support of Vichyist law and order a secret police whose methods resemble those of the Gestapo. (We have before us a detailed report of French torture methods now used in North Africa. Cruelty is no German speciality.) In this paradise of political racketeers every reactionary French element is present, manoeuvring for power. M. Flandin, representative of collaborationism between the heavy industries of Lorraine and Rhineland, is busy (we may be sure) staking his claim to be undertaker-in-chief at the obsequies of the Third Republic. It would be surprising if agents for the Legitimists, the Croix de Feu and (for all we know) the Bonapartists are not equally busy in the High Commissioner's *coulisses*. Between such gentry and the Imperial Council of ex-collaborationists there is one bond of union, a common desire to bar North Africa to de Gaulle's Committee—a body whose attitude to the Axis is unequivocal and whose leader has made plain his loyalty as a soldier to the Republic. How apt for that purpose was the production of "evidence" which "satisfied" Giraud that the anonymous individual who killed Darlan was a member of a conspiracy aimed at the lives of Giraud himself and the sacred person of the U.S. Envoy! What better calculated to antagonise against de Gaullism, not merely the High Commissioner but the American public? The result achieved—the virtual breaking-off of the promising pourparlers between Giraud and de Gaulle—is a victory for the Vichyists, for the policy of the State Department, Admiral Leahy and Mr. Murphy. But over whom? Not over the British Government, who probably share Washington's view that the worst reactionaries are one degree better than communists as associates; nor, in one sense, over the British people, who have no particular desire to see a de Gaulle absolutism foisted on France in place of a Giraud

dictatorship. What the defenders of the *status quo* in North Africa have done is to score a resounding success over all those in every Allied country who see in an unpurged Vichy regime over "liberated" North Africa a stinking offence to democracy, and who discern in the continued division of Frenchmen into two warring camps a tragic omen for the future.

It is a situation whose continuance cannot be tolerated, but which cannot be cleared up either by the Allied representatives on the spot or, still less, by departmental exchanges between officials of the State Department and Foreign Office The discovery of an agreed solution seems to call for personal intervention by President and Prime Minister. They may be driven by pressure of events and the imperative need to secure the communications of the Allied forces to take drastic measures. Mr. Arthur Krock, the well-known correspondent of the *New York Times*, has suggested that the United States might feel compelled to threaten the Fighting French—he seems to tolerate Fascist recalcitrants —with Allied administration of North Africa, which they would hold in trust for the French people. This step would obviously be exploited by Axis propaganda as a final proof of Anglo-American imperialism. That it should be discussed is indicative of the impasse into which "expediency" has led the Allies.

The Russian Victories

From the Russian front, but from no other, comes a steady, almost monotonous record of victory. The week began with the capture in the North of the junction and stronghold of Veliki Luki, controlling the approaches to White Russia. Then, the advance on the main Caucasus line continued westwards from Kotelnikovo, steadily as far as Prasgoveya. Finally, the chief forward positions of the German armies which had been trying in vain to reach the Grozny oilfield and the military road which crosses the Caucasian mountain chain fell to the assaults of the Red Army—first Mozdok and then Nalchik. Some advance has also been made in two directions in the Donetz area. Everywhere the Russian movements seem to be directed primarily to the recovery of their railways. It is more than ever doubtful whether the Germans in the Caucasus can escape. As yet the Russians have brought to bear only a fraction of their available reserves.

India's Economic Crisis

India is in the grip of a food-shortage which may have more serious consequences for the British *raj* than anything Congress can do. For several months past fragmentary statements in belated private letters from India have reached us which seemed hardly credible. The last we saw, from an Indian housewife to a relative in this country, said that potatoes were selling in Bombay at 9d. per lb. and rice (the staple food) which should be 1d. or 1½d. a lb. at 1s. In Calcutta no flour or sugar was obtainable. Mr. Stuart Emeny in a cablegram from Delhi in Monday's *News-Chronicle* stated that generally food prices had risen by 180 per cent. Standard cloth had gone up from 6½d. a yard to 1s. 8d. or 2s. He described the universal orgy of profiteering, aggravated by hoarding. Some provincial governments have aggravated the distress by controlling food on a narrowly local basis. Thus the Punjab, with a surplus of wheat, forbade its export, while in Delhi, next door, there is a wheat famine. In this situation, the Central Government has merely folded its hands, on the plea that food control falls to the provinces and that it has no powers. That is surely nonsense. In the first place, six of the eleven provinces are under unlimited bureaucratic rule. Secondly, there is a general wartime Emergency Act, much more drastic than our own, which authorises the Viceroy to do almost anything that seems good to him. This much over-rated bureaucracy, competent enough in matters of police, is less efficient and less enterprising where the welfare of the Indian population is at stake. This is dangerous. A far less acute economic disturbance towards the close of the last war and just after it drove the Punjab to the edge of rebellion and led up to the Amritsar massacre. From the meagre sources of news available we gather that while on the whole the Congress revolt is dying down, sporadic acts of sabotage still occur and the police, here and there, are still firing on crowds. The Hindu Mahasabha and even the Muslim League are both threatening in a rather unconvincing way, to resort to direct action. Such threats from conservatives need not be taken seriously, but they do mean that these rival bodies judge that the revolt of Congress was, on the whole, popular. The severity of the censorship has led to a strike of some hundred newspapers, which have ceased to appear.

Yugoslavia

In the reshuffling of the Ministries by the Yugoslav Government last week, no change was made in the Minister of the Army, Navy and Air Force. General Mihailovitch, around whom the guerilla fighters in Yugoslavia rallied at the end of the German-Italian campaign in 1941, remains Minister and will be represented in London by the Premier, Slobodan Jovanovic. Although no official reference is made to the disturbing reports about General Mihailovitch which have been published in the press, it seems probable that this rather than the need to reduce the number of Ministries is behind the reshuffle. Until the summer, everything seemed satisfactory in the leadership of the guerillas. General Mihailovitch launched his spring campaign in May against the German and Italian forces and made striking advances. The Italians were pushed back into the mountains in Montenegro, and, in Dalmatia, they had to make expeditions from the sea in order to tackle the guerillas in the coastal mountains. The region round Sarajevo was controlled by guerilla forces, and, in Serbia, communications were so much endangered that the line Belgrade-Trieste was fully guarded and cost the Italians 150 men a day. Sabotage and guerilla warfare in Slovenia and Croatia were widespread, and forced the Italians to keep 250,000 men in Croatia. So far, so good. But at the end of July, newspaper reporters in Ankara wrote that the General's main concern was the liquidation of Communist partisan bands who formed an important part of the guerilla armies, and Balkan experts in Turkey who regretted this campaign emphasised its necessity on the grounds that General Mihailovitch—said to be acting with the sanction of the Yugoslav Government in London —must continue to control all factors of resistance. This was followed up by an official statement broadcast by the "High Command of the Yugoslav Guerilla and Volunteer Army" on the secret radio station, "Free Yugoslavia." "Draga Mihailovitch," it stated, "is leading no struggle against the invaders. This fight is led by the High Command of the Guerilla and Volunteer Army of Yugoslavia. Mihailovitch's Cetniks, on the contrary, are guarding the railways against our guerilla troops." What happened between the opening of the spring campaign, when the Communist press described the General as "a leader of outstanding skill" who "has evolved a nearly perfect technique for guerilla war" and the autumn, when he was characterised as an enemy of the people, and, in some cases, referred to as being in communication with the enemy? It is obviously important that the position should be cleared up. We have watched this quarrel with increasing disquiet; since Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union, the Communist party line has been set against disruption and in favour of alliance with any government, however anti-Soviet, provided only that it fights against the Nazis. Yugoslavia is a vital area in any future Balkan campaign, and it is here that intrigues between members of the United Nations might most easily grow to dangerous proportions.

The Insurance Interests Open Fire

The insurance companies have fired off their first salvo against the Beveridge Report, and their canvassers appear to have orders to make a special push for new business and to do everything possible to bring the merits of private enterprise insurance prominently before the public. The line taken by the companies is the familiar one of denouncing bureaucracy and of appealing for private enterprise on the score of its past services. Sir William Beveridge is also accused of being in the pocket of the Trade Unions and of shamefully favouring them and the Friendly Societies at the expense of the insurance companies. These arguments entirely fail to touch the point that personal insurance, as practised under profit-making auspices, is grossly wasteful and expensive, and that the public could obviously be given very much better benefits for the same money, or the same benefits for much less money, under a unified State system. Similarly, the appeal on behalf of the insurance companies' approved societies entirely misses the point that their existence is inconsistent with the provision of an all-round service designed to give all those who contribute the same amounts the same efficient service in return. It is quite true that the Approved Societies cannot, by law, be run for profit; but they serve the profit-making companies as a very valuable instrument for getting other business which is run for profit, and the variation in benefits from society to society is an intolerable nuisance. Probably the insurance companies are not putting much reliance on arguments of this order. What they are aiming at is by denouncing the Beveridge Report as a bureaucratic document concocted in conspiracy with the trade unions to stir up enough dust to be able, through their friends in Parliament, to plead that the proposal to do away with the approved societies and to take over industrial assurance is too "controversial" to be proceeded with in wartime under the party truce. That, of course, is precisely the plea that will be put up by every vested interest; but the insurance companies are particularly well placed for pushing it because they have not only plenty of friends in high places, but also a vast army of agents whom they will endeavour to turn into propagandists of their claims.

The Attitude of the Agents

Here, of course, the vital question is whether the insurance companies can rely on their agents to take the line they want. We are glad to see that the Co-operative Insurance Society, the body connected with the Co-operative Movement, has come down on the side of the Beveridge Report, and also that the Trade Unions of the insurance agents are being wary about their attitude. The companies will doubtless try to make the agents believe that they stand to lose their means of livelihood if the Report goes through. But a good many agents will probably realise that there will be plenty of openings for men of their type of experience in the new unified public scheme of social security, and will feel that they would far sooner serve such a scheme, run without profit for the benefit of the public, than spend the rest of their lives "pushing" forms of insurance which they must know to be in many instances grossly wasteful and anti-social in form. Many agents have had qualms of conscience about the work they have been compelled to do as the servants of the companies, and are likely to welcome the opportunity of a thorough reform. It must not, however, be left out of account that for the present the agents continue to be servants of the companies, and therefore under their orders. There is an urgent need for some body, on a nation-wide basis, to devote itself to explaining the Beveridge proposals to the people, lest many of the insured be misled by false or twisted statements into a fear that the Beveridge Plan means a forfeiture of existing policies, whereas in fact it fully safeguards all existing rights and offers to the public for the future a prospect of an assured minimum, *plus* much better opportunities for additional voluntary insurances than exist to-day.

OUR PART IN MASSACRE

Not the least of the advantages Adolf Hitler has enjoyed in his startling career is that his projects and ambitions are incredible. Always they staggered us by their audacity and often by their wickedness. The more prosaic among us, of whom Neville Chamberlain was typical, never succeeded in believing in them, even after they had gone a long way towards realisation. The best of us half believe, as a child accepts a lesson learned by rote, but do we really visualise what this man is doing? Who would have believed, even two years ago, that he would challenge four-fifths of mankind to battle? And how many of us succeed even now in realising that he is engaged in exterminating the Jews of Europe, not metaphorically, not more or less, but with a literal, totalitarian completeness, as farmers try to exterminate Californian beetles? We were slow to believe it ourselves. We passed over the earlier stories of wholesale massacre in Kiev and Odessa in silence: we feared that something ugly had happened, but this butchery in batches of several thousands seemed incredible. Hitler had subjected the Jews of Germany to every imaginable form of insult, robbery and oppression, but he did not slaughter them and only once, in 1938, staged a genuine pogrom—an exploit of which normal Germans were ashamed. We knew that he was clearing the whole Jewish population out of Vienna and that most of the German towns except Berlin, Hamburg and Frankfurt were now "clean." We did not doubt that in the process they would be robbed, and that hunger, cold, disease and ill-usage would kill off the infants, the aged and the infirm. But we supposed that some kind of slave-colony was being formed from the survivors, somewhere in Eastern Poland. Whether this was ever seriously intended we do not know. If so, in July of last year the plan was changed and Himmler gave the necessary orders for extermination on a continental scale.

If the reader asks for evidence, we respect his scepticism. Among the most mischievous things a nation can do in wartime is to blacken the enemy needlessly. There is always a risk that the worst types on our side will repeat the atrocities we ascribe to the foe. In this way our future relations with an entire people, with whom we must some day live at peace, are compromised and we endanger our respect for human nature itself. It is not easy to libel this man, who has made of "brutality" the first of the Nordic virtues. Even so, proof is necessary, before we believe that he has actually done what his sadism would always have prompted him to do. The proof begins with two of his speeches; one in February and the other in November of last year, in which he textually threatened "extermination." Then comes the evidence from the various Allied Governments. Taken as a whole it is irresistible. Everywhere, in Holland, Belgium, Czecho-Slovakia and France, the process of deporting Jews to Eastern Europe began in July. The plan is systematic and no attempt is made to conceal it. From Holland six hundred Jews are deported daily. From Belgium 25,000 out of 52,000 had gone by the end of November. The process among the crushed Czechs was quicker. In France, thanks to the resistance of the people, from some generals and bishops down to the peasants, it was slower; but 10,000 had gone by September, chiefly children. What happened in Poland to West European as well as Polish Jews we know from the sober yet vivid official narrative. We do not propose to tell over again that ghastly story, of the rapid, systematic clearing of the ghettoes, of the deaths in the packed cattle-trucks and the final killing off of the survivors in the scientifically equipped slaughter-houses. Again, everything points to a plan imposed from the High Command of the New Order; what was done in Warsaw was also done about the same time at Vilna, Lublin and a dozen other towns. Write off, if you will, something for the exaggeration caused by horror and anger, yet we cannot in its broad outlines doubt mutually corroborative evidence, all of it from non-Jewish and official sources which comes from so many independent quarters. The continental massacre began in July: it had wiped out a million Jews by October: it is, presumably, still going on. None the less, the pre-war Jewish population of Europe was about six millions. It will take some time yet to kill them all.

What is to be done? The first vocal response of prominent Englishmen, in the two Houses of Parliament and elsewhere, was far from helpful. Too much was said about "retribution," a shame-faced name for vengeance, and very little about rescue. If the Archbishop of York has his way and "thousands of underlings" can be executed after this war for their share in this massacre, that will not restore to life even one of these murdered children, nor will it console a single mother. It is the less adult of mankind who relieve their feelings in this way. The only justification for threats would be their possible deterrent effect. The real authors of this crime—and of so many more that go back to 1933—know that they are doomed already. If the German people do not deal with Hitler and his lieutenants, the United Nations will, nor could they hope for immunity even if they were now to spare the surviving Jews. It is useless, therefore, to threaten them. As for the "underlings" they will vanish into the darkness out of which they came. Most of them, according to the official Polish evidence, are not Germans, but White Russians, prisoners of war, and scum recruited for the purpose in the Baltic States. To catch them and identify them in the confusion that will follow the Nazi collapse will be impossible, even if it were desirable. This chatter about "retribution" on a grand scale is folly. The more we talk of vengeance, the more stubbornly will the average German fight.

We should be ashamed to array the arguments for rescue. If in front of our eyes a Jewish child came running to any of us with a Nazi butcher after him, we would fling open the doors of our homes, at any cost and at any risk. Before that test very few of us would fail. Are we simple-minded, if we assume that the United Kingdom, which is merely all of us, with our native humane impulses, embodied as a Power, ought to act in the same way? The only difference is that there is much more it can do, besides opening its doors, and even this it has not done.

Of course there are difficulties: we do not need Mr. Eden to tell us that. They are of two kinds, the real and the imaginary. The real difficulty and the only difficulty is to get as many as possible of the surviving Jews, somewhere, somehow, on to free soil, where they will be safe for a year or two. In other words, can we get them into temporary refuges? That problem we will presently consider. But thereafter, what is to be done with them? And so the nearly insoluble pre-war conundrum is conjured up of finding somewhere in the wide world an empty country, with a tolerable climate, which will welcome them as settlers. Is it to be Palestine, Alaska, Venezuela, San Domingo or the Mountains of the Moon? Not any of these. Among other good ends that we have in view, we are fighting this war to render Europe safe for all civilised men, be they Christians or Jews. Unless these Jews can, after victory, go back in security to any land of the Continent, we shall have fought this war in vain. Where is the problem? The Dutch, the French, the Czechs will welcome the survivors back. If the Rumanians do not, they must be taught their lesson. As for the Germans, our belief is that Hitler's propaganda has infected only a minority. There is ample evidence from Jews as to the sympathy and help they have received at great risk from decent Germans. There is, then, no permanent problem of re-settlement. The only problem is to keep alive such Jews as we can help to escape, until the war is won. Call it one year or two. To organise temporary refuges up and down the world, in camps or orphanages, is a question only of money, shipping facilities and good will.

The really difficult problem is how to get the doomed Jews out of the grip of the Nazis. The best way would be to get them out by consent. This may be impossible, but with all our diplomatic resources, American as well as British, it ought to be tried. Some propose that the Protecting Power (Switzerland) should carry a message directly from the British Government to Berlin. That, we fear, would almost certainly fail. Why should Hitler oblige us? Our own alternative suggestion is for a less direct approach. We would have the British Government beg the neutral governments (Switzerland, Sweden and Turkey) to speak to Berlin jointly *in their own names*. They might offer, with the help of the Red Cross, to collect the surviving Jews first of all on their own soil. We should undertake to bear or share the cost, and to find elsewhere (in, say, Cyprus, Palestine, North Africa, the Isle of Man and Canada) refuges in which some or all could be housed and cared for, until the end of the war. That might succeed, at least in part. Its chance of success would be the greater, if the Pope would publicly associate himself with this intervention of the neutrals.

The second possibility is that some few thousands of Jews may contrive by luck or bribery or the help of underground movements to elude the Gestapo. Some have done it. There are four or five thousands of such fugitives in Portugal and Spain, which may be occupied any day. Others could get into Turkey from the occupied Balkan countries. The Turks would receive them, if it were only a question of transit to Palestine. But the doors of the Jewish National Home are locked, save to children, and refugees who do reach it without permits or visas are mercilessly turned back. That is "a thing," to use a solemn phrase of Cromwell's, "God will requite." The last thing we wish to do here is to discuss Zionism, or any political issue. But as everyone should know, the arrangement laid down in the White Paper of May, 1939, was that 75,000 Jewish immigrants might enter Palestine in the following five years. Of these 35,000 have been admitted. It seems that 40,000 have a right to enter in the next fifteen months. We need ask for nothing more. But since no consular machinery survives in Europe by which they can receive permits, we would support the plea of the Jewish organisations that these formalities should be waived. We know the objection. Some spies or Fifth Columnists would enter with the genuine refugees. We concede there might be a very few. Well, then, let such unauthorised arrivals, whether in Palestine or nearer home, be placed in the first instance under observation in camps. The responsible Jewish leaders, who have even more reason to loathe disguised enemy agents than we have, have offered their experienced assistance. It is intolerable that Palestine of all places should be closed, and by our act. There remains this island of ours. It would be, at the best, very difficult for any fugitive Jew to reach it in wartime. Very few could hope for such good fortune. But if they tried to embark, say from Lisbon, it would only be to run into an impenetrable cactus hedge of prohibitions. As Miss Rathbone has put it: "Except for allied nationals specially asked for by their governments and a few children, who cannot in effect be brought here, the door is practically barred." That scandal Mr. Morrison has yet to remove. When historians relate this story of extermination, they will find it from first to last, all but incredible. For Hitler there is the excuse of madness. But this nation is sane.

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THE BATTLE IN WASHINGTON

[This is the third of Mr. Kingsley Martin's series of articles on the United States. The others appeared on December 12th and 26th, 1942.

RECENT speeches by Mr. Henry Wallace have emphasised and amplified the post-war programme which the President will favour if at the end of the war he maintains effective control of American policy. The international organisation he proposes would involve a similar structure to the League, but its basis would be, not only a juridical tie, but an economic plan by which all members would be beneficiaries. Without such an economic plan, which would involve far-reaching changes within the internal economics of some at least of the member-States, the future before us offers, in Mr. Wallace's words, only a series of economic storms—"inflation, temporary scarcities followed by surpluses, crashing prices, unemployment, bankruptcy, and in some cases violent revolution." The instrument of immediate salvation after the war would be the extended use of lend-lease; the standard of living of the primary producer would be raised; the American as well as other producers would benefit by the general increase of prosperity and buying power. He reminds Americans that it would be fatal again for a creditor nation to adopt a high tariff policy and to refuse to accept goods in payment of debts. His picture as a whole is not compatible with high tariffs, and it involves an economic understanding at least between the principle members of the United Nations. Mr. Wallace reminds the world, as Sir William Beveridge has just reminded England, that it is essential, if our society is not to plunge into further chaos, to find a remedy for mass unemployment. To-day, he says, the average man argues, unanswerably, that "if everybody can be given a job in war work now, why can't everyone have a job in peace production later on?" In this speech he urges that private business and Government action must co-operate to maintain full employment at home and export markets abroad. In the more progressive Republican circles Mr. Wallace is regarded as having descended from the clouds.

No one doubts that Henry Wallace speaks with complete sincerity. Of all figures in American public life to-day he is the most attractive. On the platform he creates an impression of disinterested enthusiasm; in private conversation the impression is deepened and confirmed. I heard Henry Wallace speak to a vast audience in Madison Square Gardens, which had come to praise the Soviet Union. He had the courage also by implication to be critical. But there was no one who did not know that Henry Wallace's reservations were part of a sincere plan of co-operation. He ended with an account of a conversation in which he and Molotov had jointly imagined and willed practical schemes of American-Soviet progress. These few sentences were worth all the rest of that afternoon's rhetorical adulation of Russia. Mr. Wallace saw beyond the military co-operation of war; he believed in the possibility of co-operation with the Soviet Union after the war.

The chance of Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Wallace having to stand the test of translating their aspirations into practical schemes is, unfortunately, by no means good. This week the President addresses a far more reactionary and recalcitant Congress. The forces of reaction in it are strengthened both by the increase of Republicans and by the return of some of the strongest anti-New Dealers among the Democrats. A bitter struggle is inevitable. Senator Taft has already given the world warning that he and his Republican colleagues do not regard the Atlantic Charter as more than a personal statement by the President. Its proclamation was no more than a trick, in their view, for evading the senatorial control of a foreign policy. Similarly, they see in certain sections of the President's reports on Lease-Lend an effort to bind the future relations of the United States to other countries; this they describe as an infringement of the Treaty-making powers of the Senate. Nor does the issue stop here. In the summer of 1943 Congress will have the chance to refuse to renew the Lend-Lease Act, and also to deny to the President the special powers conferred upon him to make reciprocal tariff agreements. On both these issues Mr. Roosevelt will find himself furiously opposed; no effort will be spared to discover in the past administration of lend-lease some irregularity which can be elevated into a scandal fit for use against the New Deal in 1944.

It will be seen that in 1943 the relation of the President to Congress is ominously similar to that of President Wilson to Congress in 1919: In 1943 a Liberal President again faces a Congress in which his majority is unstable and his opponents are bitter enemies who hate his whole social and international policy. The Republican party to-day, someone recently remarked to me, "is hell-bent for Harding."

The analogy with the end of the last war is the more striking when we consider the part played by anti-Soviet feeling. Twenty-four years ago Russia was a revolutionary and shocking portent, a fit case for Anglo-American intervention. To-day, not far below the surface, though temporarily drowned by the popular cheers as the Red Army pushes into the Ukraine, there is the persistent and malignant whisper of those who above all things fear Socialism and the rise of the working class. There is as yet no Labour Party in the United States to act as lightning-conductor; only in New York could a Labour Party candidate stand and poll a fair percentage of votes in the November elections. The President is accused of many political crimes; in the eyes of some of his most influential opponents his most heinous is that the United States finds herself an ally of the U.S.S.R. That this bitter antipathy to the U.S.S.R. is not confined to the Republican party, but is felt within his own administration is clear enough to anyone who follows the policy of the State Department.

If Wendell Willkie now stands no chance of the Republican nomination—a view held by most observers of the American Senate—that is because his liberalism in external affairs has gone beyond bounds that the Republican machine can stomach. Probably the *coup de grâce* was his visit to Moscow, Chungking and his strongly pro-Soviet speeches since his return. Mr. Willkie represents an exciting and unusual element in American politics; it is within the bounds of possibility that his personal hold on the American public may be sufficiently strong to upset the calculations of the pundits or to prevent the election in 1944 of the replica of Mr. Harding, whom the Republican machine is now so confidently dusting and polishing up in readiness for the day of victory.

Mr. Wendell Willkie has not yet defined his position on internal economic and social policy. His past record would put him right on the side of Big Business at its worst. Leader of the fight against the T.V.A., the most beneficent of all New Deal experiments, he is a company lawyer who won the Republican nomination in 1940 after a political career, which, up to 1932, was on the Democratic side. He has made some strangely irresponsible utterances even in recent years, accusing the President alternately of being a war-monger and one of the authors of Munich. He has much to live down. Some of it, however, I think, he has already lived down. He had much to do with the passage of lend-lease; he may be thinking of votes when he champions the negro, but if so it is a championship for which every honest man ought to be grateful, especially at a time when the President's dependence on the support of the most reactionary senator from the south withdraws from the negro so much of the protection of the man who certainly desires to be their best friend since Lincoln. Again Willkie is seeking popularity in an unusual way when he takes the trouble to go to Washington to plead before the Supreme Court the cause of a Communist from California who seems to him to have had a raw deal. There are votes in fighting for civil liberties in the United States? Not many. At least there are very few politicians who have thought them worth troubling about.

I make no attempt to analyse the complexities of Mr. Willkie, and in a long talk with him not long after his return from Chungking I did not ask him to expound his social policy. I did, however, feel completely convinced that Mr. Willkie, who is a generous and a deeply emotional man, was inspired in Moscow and Chungking by the overwhelming spectacle of the Soviet and Chinese peoples struggling to be free. He was astonished, as many others have been, by the Soviet people, the change from a vast empire 90 per cent. illiterate to a closely knit federation of surprisingly educated people fighting together with terrific heroism. And that, as he said to me, went for China, too, except that China has only had five years' development as against Russia's twenty-five. As far as words go, Wendell Willkie's outlook would not seem to clash very much with the aspirations of Mr. Roosevelt or Henry Wallace. Willkie dislikes the small conceptions of the old sovereign States of Europe, and has in mind big international schemes which will get rid of economic handicaps of nationalism and give us in the Pacific schemes of mutual guarantees by which Indians and Chinese and Filipinos and the peoples of the East Indies shall all be assured both of political independence and of economic improvement. Mr. Willkie's is a liberal brand of international capitalism which desires co-operation rather than domination.

Mr. Willkie undoubtedly has a great appeal, and his popularity is a factor that must not be forgotten when dismal forecasts are made that the isolationists of the Republican party machine must prove victorious. If Mr. Willkie sustains his appeal—a difficult task for so long a period—the machine may have to drop their idea of a Harding; they may need a dynamic and liberal personality for 1944. Moreover, there seems to me the real possibility—though Mr. Willkie said nothing of it to me—that Mr. Willkie may be in a position to "go Bull Moose," as Theodore Roosevelt did in 1912. That means that he would run as a third party candidate; if he did he would split the Republicans and carry a good many Democratic votes as well. It is a possibility that cannot be excluded, one of several possibilities that leads me to scout all confident predictions of what American policy will be two years hence. It should be remembered, too, that Mr. Roosevelt is the most consummate politician of our day; if he can spare the time from winning the war he may yet again dish his enemies in this Congress.

The next year will see a bitter fight in Washington. That it should be so is a tragedy. This internal battle is not good for winning the war; the President is inclined, for the sake of necessary war co-operation, to yield to reaction on many points where a stand on principle would best serve the interests of the world. The bulk of generous and friendly feeling to the outside world in the United States is large and growing. At the present moment well-conceived plans of post-war co-operation are being officially and unofficially worked out. The future depends not only on the manipulation of votes and of conventions; it lies partly in the power of Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Wallace, now in 1943, to inform American sentiment and so to entwine American plans with those of Britain, the Soviet Union and China that even if the isolationist or imperialist wins in 1944, he will find that while he played his politics, America has in fact become an international country. But what is the use of talking like that if the President cannot even prevent the State Department making nonsense of his aspirations while he utters them?

KINGSLEY MARTIN

ADVERTISED GOODS.—The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.

A LONDON DIARY

THE other day a British general, who had hitherto mistakenly been regarded as something of a Blimp, delivered himself in some such terms as these to a surprised civilian who was interested in post-war planning: "The British Army," he said, "was not really as unprepared when this war broke out as people usually imagine. A few of us had seen what was coming and had managed to get some of the important things done before the war began. Thank goodness we did. Now I say that you civilians ought to have things at least as ready for the peace as we had for the war—and more. If you don't, some of us will want to know why. You'll get a good kick in the pants from me anyway." I doubt if this very enlightened attitude on the part of a brass hat towards the post-war planner is common. If it were, the kick in the pants would be easier to avoid. But the general's analogy is faulty. When he prepared for war he knew that plans made by the general staff would have some effect on the conduct of the war. If he would put himself in the place of the reconstruction expert to-day he would have to imagine himself making plans in the knowledge that, in all probability, directly the war broke out, authority would be handed over to the private enterprise of an entirely undisciplined group of condottieri with no interest in winning the war and a great deal of interest in making money and power for themselves.

* * *

Take a comparatively straightforward and certainly fundamental example. An international air service is quite obviously necessary after the war, and, if permitted, the experts would not find it difficult to prepare a scheme. The General would perhaps be surprised to know that a couple of very sensible, workable schemes were drawn up by French and Scandinavian experts at Geneva ten years ago. But we have gone back a long way since then. Even the fundamentals on which any scheme must be based are in dispute. Rather more than a year ago a Committee, whose chairman was Sir Francis Shelmerdine, former Director-General of Civil Aviation, sent a request to the British Cabinet. It had been set up to investigate the future of British civil aviation. There were a few preliminary questions. Were the United Nations going to institute "the freedom of the air," for instance? Before the war anyone interested in flying could tell you how ludicrously development was hampered by the claim of Italy and Britain and the United States and Uruguay and Albania and Russia and all the "sovereign" nations to absolute ownership of the sky above them. An idea that could only come from a lunatic asylum, you will say. Yes, but the British Cabinet could not decide on this question of principle and the Shelmerdine Committee came to a standstill. Now, I understand, the same point has again arisen in the Cabinet. Has the further, no less vital, point also received Cabinet, or better still, inter-Cabinet attention? If German propaganda gets its way, all the United Nations will remain disunited about air policy. American firms will use their flying start in Air Transport to attempt, as far as possible, an air monopoly; British Airways will desperately compete; Russia will see the development of both as a menace and build not for world service, but for Russian protection; China will see offers of aid to the air as renewed attempts at exploitation by the West. The next world war will already be shaping. Plans ready for the peace? Yes, we can make plans for you, general, but who will make the peace?

* * *

Have you been listening to Hitler, Goebbels, Göring and Ley talking on the British radio during the last fortnight? I assure you that their authentic voices have come over in animated conversation with British broadcasters on our European service. Propaganda has seldom been more ingenious or more justified. The British announce that they are about to cross-question a distinguished guest. Who is there? The Führer replies in his own voice, "Adolf Hitler." He then supplies at appropriate intervals pieces from past speeches, duly recorded. You can hear him announcing that the Russian armies are about to be overwhelmed, that the war is just about to be over and, when reminded of defeat, that it is not time to discuss the plans and organisation of the Russian campaign. All very good, clean fun and likely to be effective if the Germans hear it, because the phrases are not just snipped out of the context, but really recall to German listeners, who are now wondering how far the retreat in Russia will go, how they have been cajoled and bullied and mesmerised by the Führer, who did after all say that to lead the German people it is necessary to deceive them.

* * *

It was during the London Blitz when the shelter scandal was at its worst that I first met Tom Tanner, whose loss at sea is now reported in the press. He and another official of the Friends Ambulance Unit were on their way to visit one of the groups of F.A.U. men stationed abroad. They are working in a variety of places, in the Near and Middle East and in China. I had the highest respect for Tanner. He was a splendid man. I do not mean physically (though, as it happens he had been an Oxford Rugger Blue), but splendid in that combination of idealism and common sense which may be less good than faith for moving mountains, but which is so much more valuable for the less unusual, but still difficult jobs that have to be done by ordinary people. Tanner and a group of F.A.U. men worked as a few other people did in those days to save life and make death less horrible in the East End. Amongst other more heroic feats they managed to persuade the authorities to let them create a model shelter at a period before Morrison and Ellen Wilkinson had had time to bring some elementary comfort and order into shelter life. Tanner struck me as above almost anyone I knew as being a hundred per cent. reliable, and he was as selfless as most of us think we ought to be and are not.

* * *

Some of the Friends Ambulance have been loaned at their request to the Chinese Industrial Co-operatives. In helping with these small local industries which have developed locally during the war on a co-operative basis, they felt they had found work that was free from the traditional corruption of Chinese administration; they were helping to build a sound new China for the future. Recently, I had a report which described how one of them—a Scots boy, working in the Shuangshipu School in Shensi province, earned a reputation among the Chinese. Andy Braid captured the boys with his bagpipes. Before they got used to this novel kind of music, he produced a Highland fling, Scottish folk songs and American jazz on a mouth organ. Meanwhile, he explained cost-accounting and truck-engines—both major mysteries—for five hours a day and patched up sprains and vague aches during his spare time. The final touch came when he heard that a man was wanted to castrate the school piglet. "Used to keep pigs myself in Scotland," he said. "I suppose Chinese pigs are the same. Let me do that job." The students looked on with surprise. Many of them came from peasant homes and had previously thought foreigners good for nothing but sitting in motor cars and eating with forks. "He comes to China," said one boy of 13, "he can't speak much Chinese. But he can castrate pigs." Andy can be forgiven if he sometimes dreams of western industrialism. Supping off homely millet and spinach, in a little place eighty miles from the nearest steam engine, and four days from an ice-cream shop, he thinks, as his Chinese colleagues do, of the advantages of electric power. Leaders of the C.I.C., foremost among whom is Rewi Alley, realise, however, that the prob'em lies deeper than the provision of modern comforts and mechanical development. "Centralised plan, decentralised execution," is one of the C.I.C. slogans. It is to be hoped that the authorities in Chungking still appreciate the need for decentralisation. It was an unhappy moment when the Industrial Co-ops, these signs that the idea of democracy was alive in China, were taken over by the Department of Social Welfare in Chungking. I share the fear of many who follow developments in China lest everything is brought within the central control of a government which daily grows less friendly to democratic ideas as it feels more and more isolated from and let down by the West. It is some comfort to read reports that still reach me from areas in which C.I.C.'s continue to work independently and with a fresh vitality that cannot be achieved except among villagers who know each other and have the will to work together.

* * *

The alert *Week*, I see, has discovered the existence of a Polish newspaper which, despite the fact that more than one dozen Polish periodicals are provided with paper by the British Government, finds it necessary to maintain an illegal career in (of all places) Edinburgh. *Walka* is the name of this sheet, which, according to the *Week*, circulates fairly widely among the officers of the Polish army. It represents, I gather, that side of Poland which is passionate in everything, passionately anti-Soviet, anti-Semitic, and anti-Czech (on the ground that President Benes is an agent of the Soviets). It is bad enough that some of the legal Polish newspapers should be provided with bits of our exiguous British paper stocks for the purpose of spreading anti-Semitic, near-Fascist propaganda, deliberately calculated to undermine existing alliances against the Axis.

* * *

Talking of the *Week*, Claude Cockburn tells me that its list of subscribers seems not to have suffered in quality or variety from its period of suppression. Once again there is in the *Week* that flavour of inside information which everyone loves. Naturally it circulates especially among the "boys in the back room" and the boys who would like to think they are in the back room even if they are only in the passage. In wartime there is still a place for this kind of "inside correspondence" from a man who combines, from his Communist angle, a fascinating blend of—let us say—de Blowitz and Pertinax.

* * *

Some shops announce that they are not holding their usual winter sales, but that certain lines are now being offered at greatly reduced prices in all departments. In French North Africa the Allies are not selling out on their principles, but in certain lines standards are being marked down in all departments. There is this difference however. In the first case customers are being advised to shop early; in the second case Quislings are being notified that bargains may be going up to the last minute. CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Dr. John Heenan

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

". . . his rectitude was so obvious as to be perceptible even to foreigners."—From an obituary appreciation in the *Times*.

Sir William Beveridge has become a positive danger to democracy, for it is impossible to fit this latest security stunt into any democratic scheme of things.—Sir Ernest Benn in *Truth*.

In this war, so far, the British Empire has done the greater part of everything—except the talking.—*British Plastics*.

The nightgown made from 1¼ yards of material in the south-eastern area has caused quite a stir in Midlothian.—*Scottish Home and Country*.

THE PRICE OF MOTHERHOOD

FIFTY-ODD years ago, when I was a medical student, practical education of students in the art of midwifery could hardly be said to exist. At a certain stage of the medical course, one had to attend twenty women in childbirth and, curiously enough, women living near the hospital were glad, for economic reasons, to be attended by the young "hospital doctor." No steps were taken to ensure that the student had, at that stage of his career, even a theoretical acquaintance with the subject. I have referred in former articles to my complete ignorance of obstetrics when I, in turn, was first called on to officiate as the representative of medicine at the bedsides of women in childbirth. Fortunately, the majority of these cases call for little, if any, technical intervention; and what should be a natural process goes through "naturally," with practically no outside help. The training of the midwives was little more thorough on the practical side; and, before registration, they had not to satisfy the examiners, as had the doctor, of at any rate a book knowledge of the steps to be taken when confronted with obstetric abnormalities.

In those days when the great majority of women were, in their confinements, attended at home by their doctors, most practitioners, however inexpert they may at first have been, became after a while reasonably competent, even though at a certain price to their earlier patients. The amount of experience, of course, varied enormously according to the type and locale of the practice. I, myself, for instance, attended some thousands of cases in the course of my many years of medical practice. Nowadays, I understand, the training of students in the obstetric art is better than in my medical schooldays; while that of midwives is greatly improved and is still improving. Several years ago, elaborate provision was made for the examination of women both before and after childbirth. Surely, it will be said, these changes must have materially reduced the puerperal mortality rate, about which so much public anxiety has been felt and expressed?

But what are the figures? First of all, in order that we may keep our sense of proportion, let us remember that well over 99 per cent. of all births take place without lethal maternal risk; but there has been, until the last two or three years, no reduction in the puerperal mortality rate consequent on the many steps that have been taken. Thus, while in 1911, the rate of maternal deaths from puerperal causes for every thousand live births was 3.87, in 1931—twenty years later—the mortality rate was actually higher, namely, 4.11, and the death rate from puerperal sepsis, which in 1911 was 1.42, was in 1931 1.66; and even that was much lower than it had been for the previous three years. Dr. Aleck Bourne, in the new edition of *Recent Advances in Obstetrics*, quotes Professor F. J. Browne as saying that he believes he is

> justified in saying that ante-natal care has simply transferred mortality from one column to another. Deaths from obstructed labour are now comparatively rare, but we have replaced them to some extent by deaths from preventive operations.

Bourne adds that

> There are, for example, numbers of Caesarian sections, which, carrying a relatively high death rate, are yet performed, often quite unnecessarily, by relatively unskilled operators. And many other glaring examples of meddlesome midwifery, such as unnecessary induction of labour, can easily be brought to mind.

The marked improvement in the maternal death rate that has taken place in the last few years is due almost entirely to the introduction of the sulphanilamides, and their proved effectiveness in the treatment of streptococcic infection—of which puerperal fever is an outstanding example. Thus, the death rate from puerperal sepsis, which was 1.72 in 1928, had fallen to 0.86 in 1938, and to 0.82 in 1941; total puerperal mortality rates for those years being 4.25 in 1928, 2.97 in 1938, and 2.76 in 1941.

All sorts of causes have been offered by social reformers and others in explanation of maternal deaths; perhaps one of most the plausible being what we may call the economic one—that the poverty and overcrowded slum life of so many millions of our people naturally makes healthy child-bearing impossible. But the facts—including my own personal experience—lend no support to the supposition. In 1934, the *News Chronicle* printed a map showing the incidence of puerperal fever in the various London districts. Those districts with the smallest incidence were coloured white, those with the highest incidence black, "intermediate" districts being shaded proportionately. The black districts were Hampstead, Islington, Battersea, Wandsworth and Lewisham. The white ones were Rotherhithe, Bermondsey, Southwark, Clerkenwell and St. Giles'. Among the most lightly shaded districts were Limehouse, Mile End and Whitechapel. Dirt, poverty and overcrowding, though possibly contributory causes of maternal mortality, are certainly by no means the main ones.

An interesting Report of an investigation conducted by the Department of Physiology at Durham University, which takes into account the wider biological and social implications of child-bearing, has just been published. The Report is based on the records of health visitors in the administrative County of Durham for the years 1930 to 1937. The main object of the Report, as stated by its author, Mrs. C. M. Burns, is to consider the relation of the age of a woman to her fitness for motherhood. The death rate among women bearing their first child after the age of thirty was four times that of primiparae between twenty and twenty-five. Where the first childbirth takes place after the age of thirty, not only is this first birth relatively dangerous, but all subsequent births are associated with a maternal death rate relatively high for that stage of the family. Mrs. Burns suggests that "this in part explains the absence of improvement in the figures for maternal death rate in the more fortunate classes, who on the whole marry later than the working classes." In an interesting article in the *British Medical Journal* for December 5th, it is pointed out that "two broad considerations of policy emerge from this inquiry; first, that not enough stress has been laid on the biological factors concerned in maternal and infant mortality. What are we going to do in order to secure that marriage and the foundation of a family take place at the best biological ages (i.e., 20–25)? and how are we to achieve better spacing of families which counts so much towards the health and efficiency of the mother?" In the furtherance of both these aims, Mrs. Burns comments very cogently that "many women are more in need of ante-conceptional than ante-natal advice."

My own observation and experience have led me to similar conclusions as to the safest age for a first confinement. But there is another factor that calls out for remedy. So long as an appreciable number of women insist on bearing their children, even their first child, at home rather than in hospital, relying on the services of their family doctor, it is important that every practitioner should in his student days be much better trained and more experienced in the conduct of normal labour than are the majority, even to-day. First of all, I would have him made to realise his limitations, so that in good time he may obtain expert specialist help when necessary. He should know exactly how to treat simple emergencies, such as post-partum haemorrhage and torn perineum. And, as Professor Browne said, a few years ago, we should not attempt to train him in the details, but only in the principles, of the treatment of the graver emergencies, "nor should examiners require such knowledge." The doctor and the midwife should realise the sinister part which is often played by fear in the attitude of mind of the expectant mother and of her husband and relatives. I am sure that confidence and ease of mind would be promoted if a small official booklet giving practical advice on the hygiene of pregnancy, and on the preparations for the coming baby were given to every woman on marriage. Some years ago, an excellent booklet of this kind called *Before the Baby Comes* was published by the Chicago Department of Health. In the absence of such an official guide, I would advise every woman, directly she believes herself to be pregnant, to buy and to read an excellent book by Dr. Eastman, called *Expectant Motherhood*.* As has been pointed out, and as all experienced doctors know, fear and anxiety can do much to hinder "that greatest of all safeguards, natural delivery."

HARRY ROBERTS

IN PRAISE OF BOOKSELLERS

IT is time that someone paid a tribute to a noble body of men and women whose service to the nation in wartime has been badly overlooked—I mean the men and women who run the bookshops of this country. A good bookshop, after all, is one of the supreme temples of the human spirit; and a good bookseller is one of the finest of human creatures. By and large, I suspect that good bookshops have done more solid work in adult education than all the classes organised since the days of the mechanics' institutes; and I hazard the guess that Blackwell's at Oxford and Heffers' at Cambridge provide as much intellectual stimulus as any of the colleges in either of the ancient universities. It has been one of the many tragedies in the history of London University that its scattered character has failed to make it possessive about a good London bookshop. If I were the Vice-Chancellor I would know no rest until I had made that unique Londoner, Mr. J. G. Wilson, of Messrs. Bumpus'—he is, of course, a Scotsman—move bag and baggage from Oxford Street to Bloomsbury; just as every medieval college had its chapel, so every modern university would have its bookshop if it had that sense of the fitness of things which recognises that browsing among books is the surest highway to thought.

And the good bookshop has done marvels in this war. Publishers may have been blitzed; printers and binders may be short of paper and staff; Mr. Bevin may be adamant about his claims to that type of assistant whose taste and patience and ingenious dexterity in discovering the unfindable proves that Heaven itself made him a bookseller; despite everything they have kept open. Despite everything, they are eager to talk about their wares, to urge you to the book you somehow missed, to convince you that there is, after all, a realm where thought is free and reason the master of its fate. No sinkings in the Atlantic will prevent my friend Cooper from producing for me that second volume of a treatise from the University of North Carolina which I had not hoped to see until the days of peace; and his eternal good humour, even in the blackest days of 1940, and after an all-night watch with the Home Guard, will remain one of those memories which glow in reminiscence. I know few Tories more absolute than my good friend Heffer; perhaps that is why he insists that he is a Liberal. But not even his deepest suspicion that Cambridge will never be the same place after its invasion by the University of London has prevented him from continuing to welcome me to his palace, even though, in his heart, he is doubtful whether my wanderings ought not to be limited by a Defence Regulation to Collets' in the Charing Cross Road. And what, after all, could be more delightful than to know that the conviction that his opinions are devastatingly obsolete is only less profound among his assistants than that article of their faith which makes of Trinity a kind of minor annex to Heffer?

The bookshops of Oxford and Cambridge have, no doubt, a unique chance in a unique atmosphere. Old David is dead; but his stall still furnishes its mass of attractive oddities with an alert figure by your side who, if his finger

* *Expectant Motherhood*. By Nicholson J. Eastman. John Murray. 6*s*.

darts unerringly to an antique treasure is as likely as not to be Lord Keynes. Or, if you want to know what the war has done to the tastes of students, you cannot do better than talk to O. H. Jermy, who not only knows unerringly whether any given book is in print, but can tell you, quite infallibly, that you should send another volume to this student in the R.A.F. as the one you propose is the one he bought himself when he was in Cambridge on his last leave. Nor can I omit that kindliest of old friends, the head of the great foreign room at Deighton and Bells, to whom I think the fall of France was like a break in an affection which had borne the trials and tribulations of dealing with French publishers without resentment for nearly fifty years; I think his personal pleasure in finding for me, within a week, two copies of Renan's famous letter to D. F. Strauss—which ought to be reprinted—was almost as great as my gratitude to him.

Perhaps, in a sense, the bookshop at its best is seen, in wartime, in London or the provinces. There, the client is more general than particular. It may range from an eminent scholar who wants a book that no one will ever buy again, through the soldier, British, American, more rarely from Canada or Australia, to snatch a hurried hour in his leave mentally to renew his spirit, on to the old lady whom I swear I saw with my own eyes ask for two of the novels of Emma Jane Worboise (she must have lived in Kensington). If the Ministry of Information really wants to know what the provinces are thinking, I doubt if they could do better than give an hour of talk to that endless appetite for every sort and condition of bookbuyer, from the young aircraftman who is firmly told of the virtues of Professor Levy's *Introduction* to that eminent policeman turned publicist for empire to whose groans over my soul he will cheerfully listen while he digs out for me some Quaker pamphlets of the seventeenth century marvellously preserved in some back-street house in Rochdale. Not, indeed, that Manchester will ever be quite the same since the blitz destroyed, in Hewkin's shop, a paradise of treasures in early economic literature before which even connoisseurs like the late Professor Foxwell and that inexhaustible bibliographical fountain H. L. Beales would stand in reverent admiration. Or there is Grant of Edinburgh, where the kindness of the staff almost exceeds the adorable unexpectedness of the stock, and Thin, of the same place, who handed me a collection of the pamphlets of Sir Henry Vane with that casual air, so carefully assumed, which is the ultimate mark of the great bookseller by nature. Who cannot meet the test of war's endurance where the men (and women now) who preside over these noble habitations face its trials and tribulations with a confidence at once so serene and so proud?

Nor can I forget to emphasise, what every bookbuyer from San Francisco to Chungking will want to know, that Mr. J. G. Wilson remains unchanged. Nothing ruffles his cheery dogmatism. He lets Mr. Shaw take the other copy of Professor Sabine's fine reprint of Gerrard Winstanley in a mood that cunningly combines his sense of pleasure in the purchaser with a due knowledge of the obligation conferred. I have seen him morally compel, by sheer force of character, an eminent peer to buy an ugly edition of one of Trollope's novels because he knew that his lordship's niece would like (God help her!) the plates in the volume. His appreciation of the Holmes-Pollock letters ought to earn him not only the thanks of the Cambridge syndics, but endless gratification from those whom his own eye for a real book has taught that the race of great letter-writers is eternal if one goes down the side-alleys and does not remain content with the high-road. It was said, I think by a late Bodley's Librarian, that the librarian who reads is lost; Mr. Wilson embodies the profounder aphorism that the bookseller who reads wisely has won his game. The Hitlers and the Mussolinis come and go; is there a reader who frequents the bookshops unaware that while men like Wilson remain, with their endless cheerfulness, their pawky humour, their conviction that, come what may, no tyrant could ever destroy a great book to which one determined bookseller has found his way, this war is an interruption of civilised living only, not a term to that ultimate source of happiness—the satisfaction of the curiosities of the mind.

This, you may challenge, is one man's form of escapism. In some degree, perhaps; and yet, I venture to believe, not wholly so. A friend of mine, part of whose task is the inspection of interned prisoners of war, left with a young Nazi airman, at his request, a copy of Emerson's *English Traits*. Some months later, he heard from the airman, asking if it were possible for him to have the loan of other works by Emerson. A little later still, revisiting the same camp, he talked again with the airman. "If," said the latter, "we had learned these things at home, we should not have been fooled into this adventure." There is the flush of dawn over one man's darkness. So long as we keep our bookshops stocked with books and full of clients that dawn will break over the darkness of others, too; perhaps even over our own. I know no symbol of freedom more vital than the shop on whose shelves neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, need fear exclusion. For to insist that exclusion and civilisation are antithetic terms is to have the clue to humane living. If I had to put the purpose of this war in a sentence I should say that we fight it that men and women may freely choose themselves the books which give nourishment or pleasure. In Germany they burn the books; in Britain we sell them. So long as we can continue to say that, we can be confident of the outcome of this struggle.

HAROLD J. LASKI

PAMPHLET LITERATURE

ONE cannot adequately review fifteen pamphlets in a thousand words, and if I have picked out that number it is because between them they make a representative selection of eight out of the nine main trends in current pamphleteering. (The missing trend is pacifism: I don't happen to have a recent pacifist pamphlet by me.) I list them under their separate headings, with short comments, before trying to explain certain rather curious features in the revival of pamphleteering during recent years.

1. Anti-left and crypto-fascist. *A Soldier's New World*. 2*d*. (Sub-titled "An anti-crank pamphlet written in camp," this wallops the highbrow and proves that the common man does not want Socialism. Key phrase: "The Clever Ones have never learned to delight in simple things.") *Gollancz in the German Wonderland*. 1*s*. (Vansittartite). *World Order or World Ruin*. 6*d*. (Anti-planning. G. D. H. Cole demolished).

2. Conservative. *Bomber Command Continues*. 7*d*. (good specimen of an official pamphlet).

3. Social Democrat. *The Case of Austria*. 6*d*. (published by the Free Austrian Movement).

4. Communist. *Clear out Hitler's Agents*. 2*d*. (sub-titled "An exposure of Trotskyist disruption being organised in Britain." Exceptionally mendacious.)

5. Trotskyist and Anarchist. *The Kronstadt Revolt*. 2*d*. (Anarchist pamphlet, largely an attack on Trotsky).

6. Non-party radical. *What's Wrong with the Army?* 6*d*. (a Hurricane Book. Well-informed and well-written anti-blimp document). *I, James Blunt*. 6*d*. (good flesh-creeper, founded on the justified assumption that the mass of the English people haven't yet heard of Fascism). *Battle of Giants*. Unpriced, probably 6*d*. (interesting specimen of popular non-Communist Russophile literature).

7. Religious. *A Letter to a Country Clergyman*. 2*d*. (Fabian pamphlet, left-wing Anglican). *Fighters Ever*. 6*d*. (Buchman vindicated).

8. Lunatic. *Britain's Triumphant Destiny, or Righteousness no longer on the Defensive*. 6*d*. (British Israel, profusely illustrated). *When Russia Invades Palestine*. 1*s*. (British Israel. The author, A. J. Ferris, B.A., has written a long series of pamphlets on kindred subjects, some of them enjoying enormous sales. His *When Russia Bombs Germany*, published in 1940, sold over 60,000). *Hitler's Story and Programme to Conquer England*, by Civis Britannicus Sum. 1*s*. (Specimen passage: "It is a grand thing to 'play the game,' and to know that one is doing it. Then, when the day comes that stumps are drawn or the whistle blows for the last time:

> "The *Great Scorer* will come to write against your name,
> Not if you have 'won or lost, but *How you Played the Game.*'")

These few that I have named are only a drop in the ocean of pamphlet literature, and for the sake of giving a good cross-section I have included several that the average reader is likely to have heard of. What conclusions can one draw from this small sample? The interesting fact, not easily explicable, is that pamphleteering has revived upon an enormous scale since about 1935, and has done so without producing anything of real value. My own collection, made during the past six years, would run into several hundreds, but probably does not represent anywhere near 10 per cent. of the total output. Some of these pamphlets have had huge sales, especially the religio-patriotic ones, such as those of Mr. Ferris, B.A., and the scurrilous ones, such as *Hitler's Last Will and Testament*, which is said to have sold several millions. Directly political pamphlets sometimes sell in big numbers, but the circulation of any pamphlet which is "party line" (any party) is likely to be spurious. Looking through my collection, I find that it is practically all trash, interesting only to bibliophiles. Though I have classified current pamphlets under nine headings they could be finally reduced to two main schools, roughly describable as Party Line and Astrology. There is totalitarian rubbish and paranoiac rubbish, but in each case it *is* rubbish. Even the well-informed Fabian pamphlets are hopelessly dull, considered as reading matter. The liveliest pamphlets are almost always non-party, a good example being *Bless 'em All*, which should be regarded as a pamphlet, though it costs one and sixpence.

The reason why the badness of contemporary pamphlets is somewhat surprising is that the pamphlet ought to be *the* literary form of an age like our own. We live in a time when political passions run high, channels of free expression are dwindling, and organised lying exists on a scale never before known. For plugging the holes in history the pamphlet is the ideal form. Yet lively pamphlets are very few, and the only explanation I can offer—a rather lame one—is that the publishing trade and the literary papers have never gone to the trouble of making the reading public pamphlet-conscious. One difficulty of collecting pamphlets is that they are not issued in any regular manner, cannot always be procured even in the libraries of museums, and are seldom advertised and still more seldom reviewed. A good writer with something he passionately wanted to say—and the essence of pamphleteering is to have something you want to say *now*, to as many people as possible—would hesitate to cast it in pamphlet form, because he would hardly know how to set about getting it published, and would be doubtful whether the people he wanted to reach would ever read it. Probably he would water his idea down into a newspaper article or pad it out into a book. As a result by far the greater number of pamphlets are either written by lonely lunatics who publish at their own expense, or belong to the subworld of the crank religions, or are issued by political parties. The normal way of publishing a pamphlet is through a political party, and the party will see to it that any "deviation"—and hence any literary value—is kept out. There have been a few good pamphlets in fairly recent years. D. H. Lawrence's *Pornography and Obscenity* was one, Potocki de Montalk's *Snobbery with Violence* was another, and some of Wyndham Lewis's essays in *The Enemy* really come under this heading. At present the most hopeful

symptom is the appearance of the non-party Left Wing pamphlet, such as the Hurricane Books. If productions of this type were as sure of being noticed in the press as are novels or books of verse, something would have been done towards bringing the pamphlet back to the attention of its proper public, and the level of the whole genre might rise. When one considers how flexible a form the pamphlet is, and how badly some of the events of our time need documenting, this is a thing to be desired. GEORGE ORWELL

THE PREACHERS

The Lord God smiled
At the mild words
As He heard St. Francis
Preach to the birds.

Preach of a tree
With berries on,
That a woman ate
And gave to a man;

The juice was sweet,
But tart the core,
No herb in field
Their gripes could cure;

But another tree
Grew redder fruit,
And there God grafted
The antidote.

Sparrow and starling,
Jackdaw and rook,
Perched upon slates
And chimney stack.

Tom-tits trapezed
Upon the spouts,
Starlings dropped lime
Like marguerites.

They sang to the saint
With scornful beak:
"The berries give *us*
No belly-ache.

"But the pips split
And sprout in man,
And through the thighs
The roots grow down."

The Lord God laughed
At the wild fancies
As He heard the birds
Preach to St. Francis.

NORMAN NICHOLSON

THE MOVIES

"Wake Island," at the Plaza
"My Sister Eileen," at the Gaumont and Marble Arch Pavilion

There are two ways of looking at *Wake Island*. It is an exciting film of an outpost in the Pacific which audiences will enjoy on the level of *Captains of the Clouds* and other war thrillers. Four hundred U.S. marines, led by Brian Donlevy, withstand the battering of Jap bombers and a Jap fleet, and it's difficult to believe, until the very end, that there won't be a last-minute rescue to set everything at rights. Comedy and excitement of the sort provided by *Wake Island* need a happy ending, a tear dropped on the way. Those endearing tough buddies, William Bendix and Robert Preston—surely they will survive to exchange wisecracks and playfully knock each other out? The masterful major, the prickly civilian, the unpopular corporal, the mascot with a litter of puppies—one can't see a sticky end for them either. That brings us to the second aspect of *Wake Island*, the tribute paid to a very recent and heroic episode in the war. There can be no doubt of its sincerity, and perhaps for a popular movie sincerity is enough. I don't want to crab a film which does efficiently enough what it sets out to do, and the Americans are more ready than we to publicise their national feelings, but nevertheless I think *Wake Island* a failure in realism. The story, though exciting, misses being tragic. One can only enjoy it by ignoring the fact that it reconstructs actual events; and the gloating or panic-stricken Jap faces certainly help us to do that.

My Sister Eileen is notable chiefly because it marks the appearance of Miss Rosalind Russell in unsophisticated comedy. Miss Russell and her sister Eileen (Janet Blair) come up to New York to "make good in the big city." They rent a basement in Greenwich Village; and every discomfort, from heat-waves and subterranean explosions to cats and cops dropping in from the street, afflict them. This, in fact, is a companion piece to *George Washington Slept Here*, with its picture of the horrors of living in the country. I feel that I ought to have enjoyed it more than I did; it is quite a lively skit on Bohemianism with some good knockabout. But Miss Russell has done better on the higher floors. WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"The Marriage of Figaro" at the New Theatre

The most perfect of all operas has inspired Sadler's Wells to make the most of their limited resources. The orchestra is small, but the strings are quite excellent. None of the individual voices is outstanding in brilliance or resonance (once again one sadly wonders why Miss Joan Cross so rarely performs); but the ensembles are a delight. Only the most scrupulous rehearsal and a fine musical taste could achieve so felicitous a result. The zeal of the producer, Mr. Joos, has been excessive, so that all the characters suffer from the fidgets; but it is a rare treat to see in opera gestures that are expressive. The scenery of the second act is unlucky—a designer who wishes to parody rococo must know thoroughly the grammar of the style; but on the whole Mr. Chappell's light-hearted decor passes muster. Throughout the opera (except during Cherubino's arias) one listened with pleasure, which in the concerted numbers broadened into happiness. One left the theatre exhilarated by the performance, marvelling more than ever at the prodigality of Mozart's invention, and moved by the profundity of his imagination.

A Walton Concert in Liverpool

People who are pessimistic about music in England should have visited Liverpool last Saturday, where in an admirable modern hall the local orchestra and neighbouring choir, that of Huddersfield, gave a concert entirely devoted to the work of William Walton. Perhaps no other living composer could have survived this trial of strength so triumphantly, and the programme was well planned to show Walton's vigour and variety. The *pièce de resistance* was "Belshazzar's Feast," which gains on each hearing and which can never have sounded better. In addition to its musical qualities, it has a dramatic power which makes one grip one's chair. We look to the composer for a great and blood-curdling opera. The other important work given, the recent violin concerto, is more difficult both to play and to appreciate; and repeated hearing confirms an early impression that the romantic declamation of the first movement is in better focus than the nervous energy of the third. The composer conducted throughout, and imposed a brisker tempo than is usual, with considerable gain in bite and vitality.

Pictures by Children at the C.D.A., Coolings' Gallery

The Civil Defence Artists have arranged an exhibition of pictures by children, which is the more interesting because it includes many bad works as well as good ones. Hitherto we have usually seen only carefully selected works, which give too favourable a view. The truth, it seems, is that most children can paint well, but only if they are rightly guided. It is noticeable that most of the best work in this show comes from either Bedales or Dartington, schools where the art-teaching is particularly good. Of children from other schools the Belgian, M. A. Donies, and the Spanish J. Diaz are conspicuously gifted. Exhibitors worth special attention are Alma Wade, Jane MacKilligan, Audrey Cutmore, Marjorie Wattes, Karin Glaser, R. Wiseman, Jane Carter, N. Ashworth, Peter Bateman, Felicity Brown and Tom Leatherman.

Correspondence

BLIMP AND BEVERIDGE

SIR,—Perhaps you will forgive me if I criticise your article "Blimp and Beveridge," which I cannot help regarding as both unfair and mischievous from the point of view of national morale.

As a Member of Parliament I happen to agree with your view that the withdrawal of the A.B.C.A. pamphlet was in the circumstances a political blunder and I fully endorse your opinion about the value of the Beveridge proposals, and of a full discussion of them, to the morale of the troops.

It is, however, surely a mere misrepresentation of the reasons for the decision to withdraw the pamphlet to suggest, as you do, that the withdrawal was due to dislike of its contents or reluctance to permit its full discussion. As I understand it the pamphlet was not suppressed but was only temporarily withdrawn until the House of Commons had had an opportunity of discussing the matter.

I agree with you that this was an error. It is not, in my view, desirable or possible to limit discussion in this way of a topic which is on everybody's lips, and it is possible, therefore, to take too pedantic or conscientious a view of the duty of the Forces to abstain from controversial political discussion. That is, however, a very different thing from the criticism you made which was virtually a charge of bad faith against the administration of the War Office.

I should not have ventured to express this criticism had I not thought that the effect of your article was likely to be precisely that which you have attributed to the decision which you have assigned to Lord Croft. Nothing could be more harmful to the morale of troops than to encourage the belief that the administration of the War Office was actuated by party motives affecting matters altogether outside Army discipline, and this is clearly what your article was calculated and intended to do. QUINTIN HOGG

House of Commons.

[It was Blimpery, not bad faith, with which we charged the War Office. As for upsetting the soldiers, they needed no guidance from us to see in the withdrawal of the Beveridge pamphlet the pressure of Conservative headquarters. As to the astonishing argument that the pamphlet should have waited until after the debate, can it really be that either Sir James Grigg or Major Quintin Hogg has so far forgotten the theory of our democracy that they think the citizen, in or outside the Army, should wait for a Parliamentary debate to learn what opinion he ought to hold? It is the business of British citizens in the Army and elsewhere to inform their M.P.s of their views on the Beveridge Report, and A.B.C.A. was quite right in attempting to help them to reach an informed and not an ignorant opinion on the subject. A further light is thrown on the story by the information provided by an N.C.O. who states that he has been occupied recently in going round camp seeking out for confiscation not only copies of the A.B.C.A. pamphlet, but also copies of another summary of the Beveridge proposals published by the L.R.D. It would be interesting to know by what right a pamphlet bought by soldiers can be taken from them.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

THE BEVERIDGE REPORT

SIR,—Your correspondent W. L. Blake raises the same bogy which caused the panic flight into unemployment in the 1930's and which has been brought out of the cupboard every time there has been a suggestion of economic reform. It is being danced about now before our eyes in all sorts of places. Brought into the daylight, as it should be, it is seen to be nothing but a bogy.

It is a well-established theory of international trade that the possibility of exchange of goods between nations depends, not on absolute costs in terms of money, but on comparative costs in terms of efficiency of production. Many examples are given in text-books of goods, produced in a country where wages are low, being ousted by goods produced in a country where wages are high. The price of the low wage goods is higher than those of the high wage goods because the low wages of the workers really means a lower efficiency value.

The way to win back markets after the war is not to reduce wages or, by reducing taxes and social insurance contributions from industry, reduce the subsidiary costs, but to increase the efficiency of industry in terms of quantity of product. Better machinery, healthy and well trained workers, are a better way of reducing costs than the way of keeping the standard of living of the workers low. Henry Ford proved this for all men to see.

We can only see the full value and possibilities of the Beveridge Report if we begin to see the economic system in terms of goods instead of in terms of money. Social Security will result in redistributing goods and services to make a higher standard of living for thousands. The production of these goods will give work to many more thousands and call for the invention and use of up-to-date and efficient machinery.

In regard to the loss of income from overseas investments, we have too long lived on the past, and this easy living has reduced the incentive to efficiency. Now we shall have to "pull up our socks" and so organise our industry that it is more efficient and produces more goods per unit of labour and machinery than ever before. Thus can the bogy be laid, and only thus

FRED PARKER

4 Victoria Gardens, Bristol, 6.

SIR,—Judging by J. C.'s airy little trifle, he thinks the Beveridge plan will demoralise and bankrupt us. I recommend him to "splash" eighteenpence on "Workers in the Soviet Union," by Andrew Rothstein (Frederick Muller, Ltd.), giving special attention to chapter IV on "Social Insurance," so that when he learns how the unfortunate Soviet people are mollycoddled in a way that dwarfs the Beveridge proposals, he will be roused to astonishing heights of poetic lamentation.

Thus will the world of art be enriched, whilst the madhouse waits to claim its victim when he realises that these same people are nevertheless the most vital in the world.

Will J. C. tell us whether he opposes only the penny plain state-insurance principle, whilst favouring the twopenny coloured variety of private enterprise on the ground that if you care for and can afford it, it does one no harm? Or does he eschew all forms of insurance—would never go into business because of employer's liability insurance, nor own a motor vehicle because of third-party insurance, nor buy a house on a mortgage because the building society would require insurance on the premises. Maybe "J. C." stands for Julius Cæsar, and he has not yet caught up with the twentieth century.

110 Bunbury Road, Birmingham, 31.

A. E. SCARR

CHRISTIANITY

SIR,—The Statement of Christian Belief issued by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Moderator of the Free Church Council will doubtless find a wide and eager audience. It isn't, one supposes, addressed to theologians, and laymen may presume to comment. Dr. Temple and Dr. Whale have set themselves no easy task: all honour to them for attempting it. But, that said, one layman at least feels that their statement is a sad disillusionment and, if anything, a proof of the failure of the Churches which they represent.

The Statement centres in the Spirit and Life of Christ. Christ's teachings were, one must surely admit, set forth in simple language—the language understood by the multitudes who flocked to Him. But this document, as I read it, is couched in the language of a Civil Service Memorandum, and seems to me equally obscure and non-committal. There is one sentence, split only by parenthesis and semicolons, which extends to 126 words, and for me, I confess, has no meaning: nor can I really believe that the concluding "summing-up" phrase is anything more than a puzzling pious platitude to the average man.

The Statement starts with a diagnosis with which—at least in part—we can agree. But it has some queer contradictions. We are told that there is "widespread ignorance of what the Christian faith is"—surely a highly controversial statement. The teachings of Christ, at least, are pretty well known. "As a result of this ignorance," we are told, "multitudes of people regard religion as irrelevant to the matters which most concern them." The latter, no doubt, is true: war most concerns them, and Christ's teachings are certainly "irrelevant," if not antagonistic, to that. But this is not so much, if I judge aright, a "result" of "ignorance of the Christian faith" as the result of what their leaders, spiritual and temporal, proclaim.

The second paragraph of the Statement is beyond reproach. "To love thy neighbour as thyself" should govern all human relationships. "We can all see that the Christian way is the right way." (But can we, if we are so ignorant of it as the first paragraph says?) "But we do not follow it." True indeed! "And when we try we find that we cannot." That goes to the very heart of things, and millions of readers must have looked with hope, as I did, for further enlightenment.

What is the answer? So far as I understand it—and, wrapped in its mass of wordage, I may understand it but dimly—it is (*a*) "Love the Lord Thy God with all Thy Heart," (*b*) study the Bible, and (*c*) believe not only in the example of Christ's Life and Redemption, but also that our fellow-man is *always* the "brother for whom Christ died." Now if I love God with all my heart, I cannot—unless He is something quite different from the idea which the Christian faith has given us—love war and Winston Churchill also: and I cannot believe that that "worship" which the Statement enjoins will come to Him very pleasantly from men who are entirely engaged in methods of destroying their fellows. If I study the Bible, it must surely convince me that war and domination are bad things, and that massacre and mutilation and destruction are crimes. If I follow Christ's example, I must believe in humility, and that "the meek shall inherit the earth." And if, as the Statement clearly says, I am to love my neighbour as myself, must I not love Indians and Negroes and Black Marketeers and Quislings and Saboteurs and Pacifists, as well as Germans and Italians? Do Doctors Temple and Whale enjoin me to do so? I cannot make out if they do, and that is the substance of my accusation. I don't believe that I, or most people, are "ignorant of the Christian faith": what we are puzzled about is the attitude of the Christian churches. If we love our fellow-men as ourselves, we cannot fight and kill them, whoever they are: I have yet to find anything in Christ's teaching which sanctions that. Doctors Temple and Whale can be Christian martyrs or they can be materially successful prelates: they cannot, as I see it, be both. And I take leave to doubt whether they can bring comfort or enlightenment to any true Christian by recommending, under discreet verbiage, the example of Christ and the study of the Bible as well as, one must conclude from their omissions, the practice of war.

LIONEL FIELDEN

SCHOOLS AND CHURCHES

SIR,—The writer of "The Schools and the Churches" is seriously worried about the use of "State" or "public" money to maintain Catholic schools. He appears to entertain the familiar opinion that the State is a kind of impartial, omniscient and inevitably atheistic super-entity to which all must surrender personal and parental responsibility. Is there any evidence to suggest that the State is other than a social integration conditioned by the desires and intentions of all, including minorities, who are contained within it?

The *New Statesman* used to be vigilant in defence of minorities. Why, then, is it deemed just or reasonable to deny to Catholics the education which they need, and for which they contribute, in rates and taxes, equally with others? The present dual system is indeed to be condemned, with the unjust double burden of public rates and private contribu-

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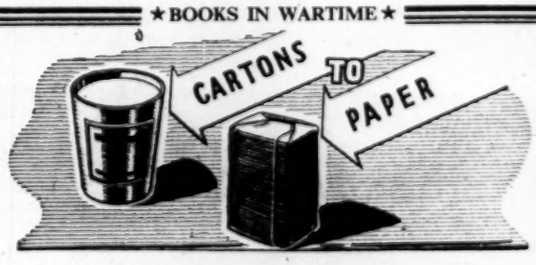

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tions which is placed upon all, rich and poor, who wish to give their children a Catholic education. Catholics are not trying to get their education at the expense of others, but do wish to get, in return for their public contributions, an education equal, in material things, to that available to the children of those content with a non-religious education. At present the Pope is not on the rates, but the rates are most definitely on the Pope.

I do not deny that there are organisational difficulties to be faced in this problem. But are these difficulties made less by the trailing of financial and political red-herrings across an already confused scent? Does it really help matters to declare dogmatically that the Church is inherently antagonistic to socialists, or that the upholders of religious education are motivated primarily by political considerations? This latter suggestion alone indicates a deplorable ignorance of the fundamental beliefs and philosophy of Catholics, at least. H. F. RANCE

HORROR IN POLAND

SIR,—Millions of Jews are threatened with extermination. "Jews are to die in torture," says Himmler. The United Nations, holding up their united hands in horror, express the righteousness of their indignation. Yet you print, in this hour of unimaginable calamity, a letter from G. F. Green who says he has met some nice Germans and accuses *me* of an atrocity!

"An experienced journalist should avoid the rehashing of old stories," he writes—and you insist that you don't believe the story in question.

Now, what exactly did I do? After hearing, at an intercession service which the leaders of Jewry, including the Lord Mayor, attended, the Chief Rabbi detail an act of atrocity, I went to the length of getting his manuscript from him, so that my quotations would be *verbatim*. More than that, I obtained from the Jewish World Congress the facts about the source of information which he used. These, I printed.

How more careful could I have been? Was I expected to go to Poland to investigate the matter—or ask Hitler to come over to swear an affidavit before a Commissioner for Oaths? I certainly have got more reliable proof than any that can be quoted to substantiate any of the statements in the Old or New Testaments.

Did Gibbon go to ancient Rome or call up Nero? Did Macaulay interview any of the great historical figures about whom he wrote?

According to G. F. Green, I mustn't print what the Chief Rabbi says, perhaps because it Hertz. Yet we swallow Gibbon and Macaulay without question.

History is last year's penny paper censored by the dead. HANNEN SWAFFER

SIR,—In your issue of December 26th, 1942, there appeared a short paragraph in "A London Diary" which might be interpreted as an attempt to diminish the German responsibility for the crimes perpetrated in German-occupied countries, and particularly in Poland. In this paragraph you expressed the opinion that "the people actually engaged in murdering the Jews in Eastern Europe are a special corps of Lithuanians, Latvians and Russian Whites." As you refer to the evidence of the Polish Government's official reports, may I be permitted to draw your attention to the fact that these reports, published in the *Polish Fortnightly Review* for December 1st, 1942, do not justify this view. They merely mention "the security battalions, consisting of Lithuanians, Latvians . . ." to whom Germans entrusted the task of guarding the bounds of the Warsaw ghetto. These reports provide ample evidence that the people "actually engaged in murdering the Jews" are the Germans. It is true that in their policy of extermination the Germans have always tried to find accomplices among other peoples. But, if they are able to find some criminals, willing to carry out their orders, it is the Germans who bear the full responsibility for the crimes committed under their ruthless occupation. DR. WITOLD CZERWINSKI

Polish Fortnightly Review. Editor

[In the *Polish Fortnightly Review* (December 1st) there are two references to the miscellaneous group who are aiding the Germans in the work of terror and slaughter in Poland. There is no direct evidence, as far as we know, about the nationality of the individuals at work in the slaughter houses, but the *Polish Fortnightly Review* mentions among those doing the general work of terrorism Lithuanians, Latvians, Russian Whites, Ukrainians and Russian prisoners. The proportion, in the Warsaw Ghetto it states, is fifty of these "White Guards" to ten Germans. Of course we are in agreement with Mr. Czerwinski that the responsibility for these crimes falls on the Nazis leaders. Who doubts it?

PRESTIGE ADVERTISING

SIR,—Your correspondent in your issue of January 2nd, in dealing with advertising in periodicals, poses the question whether there is any obvious flaw in the arguments put forward in the Oxford Bulletin of Statistics which he quotes. The answer clearly is, "Yes—and not one flaw but several."

The total current annual consumption of paper on all journals classified by the Paper Control as trade or technical is only approximately 3,900 tons. Out of this already very limited class of journal the writer admits with astonishing frankness that he has only examined "six trade papers chosen at random." Yet from this cursory examination he is prepared to deduce the percentage of advertisements carried throughout the whole periodical press and the nature of such advertisements, arriving at the conclusion that 18,000 tons of paper per annum are consumed on purely prestige advertising. The conclusion is as unsound as the method employed in arriving at it.

I am at the moment only concerned with trade and technical journals. Of the above total of 3,900 tons some 1,500 tons per annum are consumed by the agricultural and nursing journals, whose advertisement pages (largely classified) contain virtually no purely prestige announcements and are essential to readers. The remainder of the trade and technical press accordingly consumes approximately 2,400 tons per annum, of which (accepting the figure of 58 per cent.) 1,400 tons are devoted to advertising.

It is quite untrue to say of this advertising that it is "mainly prestige publicity for products which are either unobtainable or in so short supply as plainly not to need pushing by way of advertisement."

In technical journals directed to manufacturers the bulk of the goods advertised *are* obtainable by those readers with the necessary priority to whom the knowledge of where such goods can be obtained and the function they perform is necessary.

In trade journals directed to retailers again a high proportion of goods are obtainable though in limited quantity, and retail trading is difficult enough without the retailer being deprived of this vital information, and the almost equally vital information which enables him to explain to his customers what goods are not at present available and why. Moreover, the advertisement pages of the trade press constitute in many cases the sole remaining link which must be maintained between manufacturers depleted of sales staffs and the machinery of distribution.

I have made no reference to space occupied by Government announcements. I have not presented any of the powerful arguments which may be put forward in support of purely prestige advertising to consumers including those overseas.

The case for the trade and technical press as a whole rests on quite other grounds—on the immense but far too little appreciated contribution which it is making to the war effort, a contribution in which the advertisement pages play no small part, and which involves a consumption of paper which is remarkably small in relation to the importance of the task. ROLAND E. DANGERFIELD
Chairman
Council of the Trade and Technical Press.
Imperial House,
Kingsway, London, W.C.2.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Like the sailor who spends weeks in an open boat and whose mind is dazed by the interminable crises of the waves, the modern reader of *Clarissa** comes back too bewildered at first to give an account of himself. Chiefly he remembers the islands of naked drama that startled him in that shuffling sea of words and procrastinating argument. How unexpected it was that Richardson, who had made the reader count every drop of water in each oncoming wave as it broke, could jump into talk as laconic as Defoe's or into action as well accoutred as anything in Fielding. What a powerful world fumed like a prince behind the bars of Richardson's prosaic middle-class morality and inordinate dilatoriness! There seems indeed a mania, if it is not a quiet madness, in Richardson's casuistries. Swift sends out the madman's shrieks before the spectacle of the human animal: Richardson, in his morbidity, creeps nearer and nearer, inch by inch, and with the neurotic's duplicity, towards the keyhole: he extols Virtue so that the carnal outburst when it arrives shall be the more violent. The dull little printer from Derbyshire was mad about sex: abduction, seduction, marriage are not enough for his Clarissa. Only rape can satisfy his phenomenal day-dream. Sex was a Fate which directed him as inexorably as it directed the steps of Oedipus.

It was Richardson's genius that he could seize this inner abstract world of the passions and the will, and paint with the highly finished realism which the Dutch painters or a writer like Defoe devoted to externals. At the beginning one might simply be reading yet another novel of intrigue, which just goes on and on; and but for the incredible suspense in the narrative, I think many readers must have given up *Clarissa* by the end of the first volume. It is not until the third and fourth volumes are reached, when this cryptic determinist transposes his intrigue into the sustained and weeping music, the romantic tragedy of Clarissa's rape and prolonged preparation for death, that we get his measure. She dies piously, yet like a Shakespearean conferring greatness upon all around her by the starkness of her defeat. At the beginning we are not prepared for this greatness in Clarissa; even in that last volume, we are often uncertain of her real stature. It is not easy for virginity to become Virtue. Would she be anything without Lovelace? And yet, we know, she is the crown upon Lovelace's head. He too becomes tragic under her judgment as she becomes tragic by his act. These two reflect glory upon each other, like saint and devil. But in the first volume there is no difficulty about deciding who is the greater as a character or as an abstract conception. Lovelace has her beaten hands down. A practical and languid correspondence wakes up when he takes pen in hand. Anna Howe, the "pert" friend, makes circles round her. Arabella, with her nose out of joint, is livelier comedy. The scheming brother, the gouty father with his paroxysms, the supplicating and fluttering mother, and the endearing uncles with their unendearing family solidarity and intentions, all make a greater mark on our minds than the all too articulate Clarissa does. Our one hope is that witty Miss Howe is right when she teases Clarissa with maidenly self-deception. "The frost piece," as Lovelace called her, looks exactly like one of those fascinating prudes whose minds are an alphabet that must be read backwards. But no; though she will enchant us when she is rattled, with cries like "Oh, my Nancy, what shall I do with this Lovelace?" her course and her motives are clear to her; and we begin the slow and painful discovery of a virtue which finds no exhilaration except in scruple. We face an inexhaustible determination, and this is exhausting to contemplate, for Clarissa is as interested in the organisation of human motives as Richardson himself; and he insinuates himself in her character so thoroughly, niggling away with his "ifs" and his "buts" that he overwhelms her, as Flaubert overwhelmed Madame Bovary.

Still this does not take from the drama of Clarissa's situation, and does, in fact, increase the suspense of it. If you skip—and of course you do, looking up the letters in the obliging synopsis—you do not, as in other novels, find yourself caught out by an overlooked sub-plot; you are back in the main situation. Will the family relent? Will Lovelace abduct, marry, rape or reform? There's hardly a sub-plot worth mentioning in this huge novel. It follows the labyrinth of a single theme. And though we turn to Anna Howe for glimpses of common sense, and for a wit to enliven the glum belligerents of what Lovelace—always a psychologist—called "the Harlowe dunghill" with its wills and deeds of settlement, we see in Clarissa's stand something more than a virtuous daughter bullied by her parents. She is a lawyer in family morals, and in Lovelace's too; but she is the first heroine in English fiction to stand against the family. Richardson called them "the embattled phalanx" and in *Clarissa* he goes to the heart of the middle-class situation: money, accretion of estate, the rise in the world, the desire to found a family, in conflict with the individual soul. She and Lovelace complement each other here. She thinks her family ought not to do evil to her, yet takes their evil upon herself; she is not a rebel but is tricked and driven into becoming an outcast and at last a saint. Like Lovelace, she has asked too much, "for people who allow nothing will be granted nothing; in other words, those who aim at carrying too many points will not be able to carry any." The rebel is Lovelace. The rake is too superb for middle-class morals.

Lovelace is Richardson's extravagant triumph. How did such a burning and tormented human being come out of that tedious little printer's mind? In the English novel Lovelace is one of the few men of intellect who display an intellect independent of their authors'. He is half villain, half god, a male drawn to the full, and he dominates English fiction. He is all the more male for the feminine strain in his character—his hatred of women, his love of intrigue, his personal vanity, his captiousness and lack of real humility—and a very masculine novelist like Fielding is too much a moralist, and too confidently a man, to catch a strain like that. And how Lovelace can write! When Clarissa's letters drag, like sighing Sunday hymns, or nag at us in their blameless prose, like the Collect for the day, the letters of Lovelace crackle and blaze with both the fire and the inconsequence of life. His words fly back and forth, throwing out anecdotes and the characters of his friends, with wonderful transitions of mood. In one paragraph he is writing a set apostrophe to Clarissa, full of longing and halfway to repentance. He shakes the mood off like a man who is drunk with grief and throws off this description of his gouty old kinsman:

> And here (pox of his fondness for me! it happens at a very bad time) he makes me sit hours together entertaining him with my rogueries (a pretty amusement for a sick man!) and yet, whenever he has the gout, he prays night and morning with his chaplain. But what must *his* notions of religion be, who, after he has nosed and mumbled over his responses, can give a sigh or groan of satisfaction as if he thought he had made up with Heaven; and return with a new appetite to my stories?—encouraging them, by shaking his sides with laughing at them and calling me a sad fellow in such an accent as shows he takes no small delight in his kinsman.
>
> The old peer has been a sinner in his day, and suffers for it now; a sneaking sinner, *sliding*, rather than *rushing*, into vices, for fear of his reputation, or rather for fear of detection, and positive proof; for those sort of fellows, Jack, have no real regard for reputation. Paying for what he never had, and never daring to rise to the joy of an enterprise at first hand, which bring him within view of a tilting or the honour of being considered as the principal man in a court of justice.
>
> To see such a Trojan as this, just dropping into the grave, which I hoped ere this would have been dug, and filled up with him; crying out with pain and grunting with weakness; yet in the same moment crack his leathern face into a horrible laugh, and call a young sinner charming varlet, encoring him as formerly he used to do the Italian eunuchs; what a preposterous what an unnatural adherence to old habits.

Or there is the awful description of that old procuress, Mrs. Sinclair, a horror out of Rowlandson, who advances upon Clarissa on the night of the rape, when all Richardson's fascination with carnal horror breaks out. There is a double terror in it, because Lovelace himself is writing as if trying to drive evil out of his mind by a picture of evils still greater:

> The old dragon straddled up to her, with her arms kemboed again, her eyebrows erect like the bristles upon a hog's back, and, scowling over her shortened nose, more than half hid her ferret eyes. Her mouth was distorted. She pouted out her blubber-lips as if to bellow up wind and sputter into her horse-nostrils, and her chin was curdled, and more than usually prominent with passion.

The temperate, lawyer-like mind of Richardson does not prepare one for passages like this. When there is matter-of-factness in the eighteenth century, one expects it to be as regular as Pope's couplets were. But Richardson is not consistent. In the sheer variety of their styles the letters in this novel are astonishing. The bovine uncles, the teasing, parenthetical Miss Howe, the admonitory Belford, the curt Colonel Morden, heading for his duel, the climbing brother whose descendants are no doubt in the British Union of Fascists, all have their styles, and they are as distinctive as Lovelace's or Clarissa's. Richardson is the least flat, the most stereoscopic novelist of an age which ran the plain or formal statement to death in the end. Another point: he is a writer of indirect narrative. We are shown scenes at second hand, for the epistolatory method requires it so; and we become used to a sort of memoranda of talk and action which will tire our inward eye because our judgment is called upon at the same time. So there are many reported scenes which are relative failures, for example, the early and rather confusing ones between Clarissa and her mother. One has a muddled impression of two hens flying up in the air at each other and scattering feathers all round. Yet even in this kind of scene Richardson can, at times, write talk which is direct and put action wonderfully under our eye. The scene of the rape is tremendous in this respect; and so is the awful picture of the brothel when Mrs. Sinclair breaks her leg and the harridans come out in their night attire; and there is the comic, savage picture of Lovelace defeating the attempt of his family to try him. But where Richardson shook off the slavery of his own method is shown at its best, I think, in Belford's letter describing the prison scene where the two prostitutes offer to bail Clarissa out:

> "We are surprised at your indifference, Miss Harlowe. Will you not write to any of your friends?"
>
> "No."
>
> "Why, you don't think of tarrying *here* always."
>
> 'I shall not live always"

Even in those few lines one sees Richardson advancing his inner narrative and, if one continues this conversation, one also sees him patiently and unerringly preserving character. One might almost say that prolix as it was, his method was economical, given his chosen end. The slowness comes from an excess of examination, not an excess of words. No prose has fewer redundancies.

We come to the death scene. The torment of Lovelace pacing his horse past the gate of the house he dare not enter, though Clarissa lies dying within, is not rhetorical. It is defiant as fits a being so saturnine, it is in the mind as becomes a man of intellect, it is the changeable, imploring, raging madness of a clever mind that has met its conqueror. Lovelace is a villain no man hates, because he is a man. He is candid, if he is vain. He can argue like Iago or debate like Hamlet, and in between send a purse of a few guineas to a rogue who has helped him to his present catastrophe. It is strange to think of him—the only Don Juan in English fiction and done to the last Freudian detail. Clarissa dies like a swan amid

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* *Clarissa* By Samuel Richardson. Everyman. 4 vols.

the formal melody of a prose into which Richardson fell without affectation.

> Her breath being very short, she desired another pillow. Having two before, this made her in a manner sit up in her bed; and she spoke then with more distinctness; and seeing us greatly concerned, forgot her own stutterings to comfort us; and a charming lecture she gave us, though a brief one, upon the happiness of a timely preparation, and upon the hazards of a late repentance, when the mind, as she observed, was so much weakened, as well as the body, as to render a poor soul hardly able to contend with its natural infirmities.

It is a strong test of the illusion that Richardson has cast upon us, that we think of Lovelace like a shadow upon Clarissa as she dies; and of Clarissa rather than of Lovelace when *he* appears. These lives are known by their absences; they are inextricable, tangled in the thousands of words they have spoken about each other, and are swept away at last into other people's words.

V. S. PRITCHETT

BACK TO MUMBO-JUMBO

Man the Master. By GERALD HEARD. *Faber.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Take five or six sweeping and unconfirmed generalisations and state them as if they were established historical or scientific facts. Mix them well together in Chapter I. Add some false analogies and remix in Chapter II. Call this mixture "Diagnosis," or "statement of the problem," and label it Part I. Leave this mixture to cool while you take five or six sweeping and unconfirmed generalisations about the future; add a few false analogies; mix them well together; call the mixture "Prognosis" and label it Part II. Take the mixture in Part I and mix it with the mixture in Part II; add some false analogies and your year's ration of solemnity, uplift, and obscurity, and mix together for as long as your publisher and the paper ration will allow. Call the mixture solution or conclusion, and label it Part III (some cooks, e.g., Mr. Heard, prefer to leave this as the last chapter of Part II).

The above is the old original and still by far the best recipe for proving that Mumbo-Jumbo is God and there is no other God but Mumbo-Jumbo, that truth and salvation are to be found only in one's navel or one's unconscious or "illumination" (or in the cook's navel, unconscious, or illumination), and that if only we give up the fatal habit of using our reason (where on earth do the Mumbo-Jumboists find the evidence for their universal assumption that we habitually use our reason?) and obey the voice of Mumbo-Jumbo, speaking through the mouth (or navel) of his priest, medicine-man, Fuehrer, prophet, astrologer, saint, "society palmist," or seer, we shall back the winner in next year's Derby, end war, cure our pains in the small of the back, know truth, have a perfect complexion, and build a perfect society. Mumbo-Jumboists belong to two classes: some believe in their Mumbos or Jumbos and write books, others don't believe and write advertisements. Mr. Heard belongs to the first class; in his present book he unfortunately confines himself to Truth and the perfect society.

His thesis is based upon a series of sweeping historical and psychological statements. To establish the truth of any of them would require the careful analysis of a large number of facts. No such proof is ever given; some of them may be true, some are almost certainly untrue, others are a mere hotch-potch of crude psychology and half-baked psycho-analysis. Mr. Heard alleges *ex cathedra* that all our present social ills are due to the fact that "modern" man has developed his consciousness at the expense of his unconsciousness. For some unexplained reason he relates consciousness with individuality, materialism, and democracy, the subconscious with spirituality and "loyalty." Before the 19th century, he maintains, the use of reason and consciousness was happily rare, men relied upon their unconsciousness and therefore were able to "believe in the self-sacrificing loyalty and enthusiasm which had sustained human society." To-day, because we all use our reasons, nobody believes in anything but machines; there is no loyalty, no enthusiasm, no "self-sacrifice." For Mr. Heard's psychological assertions there is no support in psycho-analysis or anywhere else; his picture of pre-nineteenth century history is as imaginary as the ancient myth of a Golden Age or as the 18th century myth of the Noble Savage. The whole of history has to be forced to fit the thesis. On page 37 it is implied that before the 19th century man, because he had not "lost contact with his subconscious" (O, Freud! O, Mumbo-Jumbo!), did not suffer from "the 'lateral' distress" (O, Mumbo-Jumbo!) of attacking his own species. On page 53 we are told that there is less cohesion in modern than in ancient states—which seems to be simply turning facts upside down. On page 62 there is a purely imaginary account of the Congress of Vienna and of "the anthropological intuition" (O, Mumbo-Jumbo!) of Talleyrand, who is represented to have deliberately reinstated the kings in a last desperate attempt to keep the European in contact with his unconscious and to give him someone to trust.

These are characteristic examples of Mr. Heard's historical generalisations. They are spattered with false analogies, e.g., on page 65 that in modern societies, because they are old, "their power of repair is getting steadily slower"—for which there is no evidence at all, or on page 132 that, as the eyes are at the top of the body and occupy a small space, so the number of men at the top and leading society "need not be large"—which is just silly. Upon this diagnosis Mr. Heard superimposes his prognosis. We must get back to contact with our unconsciousness; at the same time we must not lose contact with our consciousness. The way to do this is by division of labour. Society must be divided into three categories of men and out of them must be built an integrated democracy. The lowest class consists of the masses of workers. Their main preoccupation is and should be copulation, work, and loyalty. Mr. Heard's "message" to this "routineer type," as he calls them (page 182), is that they must work and may copulate, provided that they do the latter with reverence and treat sex as sacramental. The second class are what we now call the bourgeoisie, technicians, administrators, craftsmen, even artists. They are allowed for the most part to use their reasons. But as administrators, politicians, and statesmen, they will take their orders from the third and highest class, the seers or Neo-Brahmins. These people, we are told *ex cathedra*, with a new type of higher psychology, are appearing in small numbers all over the world. By contemplation, renunciation, asceticism, and mystic practices they attain revelation through the unconsciousness. They have the "vision," they can tell what is good and what bad, they can foretell the future. No evidence of their existence or powers is given. They will have no political power, but they will advise the politicians who will accept the advice and act on it. Mr. Heard thinks that there is evidence that the politicians are so desperate and despairing that they really will set up and obey this College of Old Moores and Madame Blavatskys. His only evidence is an article which appeared in Mr. Luce's paper *Fortune* in 1940, an article which, he says, "will probably join those classic pamphlets or 'tracts for the times,' which, like catalytic agents, suddenly crystallise a solution."

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The reason for Mr. Heard's optimism is that Mr. Luce's businessmen proclaim the fact that they desire "a voice coming from something not ourselves, in the existence of which we cannot disbelieve." O, Mumbo-Jumbo, O, Mumbo, O, Jumbo!

LEONARD WOOLF

A GOOD HISTORY

America: The Story of a Free People. By ALLAN NEVINS and H. S. COMMAGER. *Oxford University Press.* 7s. 6d.

This war is repeating many of the habits of its predecessor, and, not least, in the sudden emergence of an interest in American history which the publishers are doing all they can to satisfy. Some of the books are unforgivably bad; they make it evident that the writers know nothing at first hand of their subject, and are searching either to summarise the once popular Whig legend in which Sir George Trevelyan was the most accomplished chronicler, or they are an attempt to develop without excessive knowledge the age of good feeling in Anglo-American relations, in which George Louis Beer was a learned, if somewhat naive, pioneer. There exist, in fact, many admirable popular histories written by Americans for Americans—works like those of Charles and Mary Beard, of Professor Harold Faulkner, and of Louis Hacker, perhaps the most interesting of the younger American historians; and it would not be easy to find a history which represents New England liberalism better than the admirable history in which Professor S. E. Morison, of Harvard, has contrived with Professor H. S. Commager, of Columbia, to set out the broad line of American evolution in a way as illuminating to the general reader as it is attractive to the professional scholar.

The present work, which is by two of the best American historians now living, is an attempt to do for the general reader in Britain what the Beards above all achieved so remarkably for the general reader in the United States. In some 400 pages, the general character of the American epic is described. Politics, literature, economic institutions, foreign policy, are its main themes, and they are discussed with that quality we should expect from scholars of their authors' distinction. The theme round which their book is written is that the three and a half centuries they survey are in essence the record of a free people, that nowhere, in the history of the world, has the common man had ampler opportunity of fulfilment than in the United States.

There are not many readers in Britain with the knowledge necessary to realise that American history is not less fascinating than it is important. If this book does nothing else than make this fact more widely known, it will have performed a great service. Above all, if it made clear that the impersonal forces of history set far more of the environment of the statesman than it is pleasant to admit, that things like the cotton-gin, the McCormick harvester, the Bessemer steel process, have far more influence on men's lives, than any President who has sat in the White House. The half-revealed background in which the real working of constitutions is determined is usually more interesting than the formal principles. Many of the future problems of America will be solved democratically only if the philosophy of the business man, who has been the main influence in shaping the climate of its opinion, at least since the Civil War, is rejected. All this combines to make a civilisation, the understanding of which seems at least as important to the citizen of contemporary Europe as that of ancient Greece or ancient Rome. No doubt the war has stimulated an effort to that understanding, and this book is part of an eager campaign to domesticate the study of American life and institutions among us. I hope it will succeed; but I hope it is understood in places like the Board of Education and the Ministry of Information that a handful of books, and a little group of teachers' courses, will achieve nothing permanent in character and little of the enthusiasm begotten of the last war remained after Versailles; and little enough will remain after this war save on two conditions. The first is the defeat of the isolationist forces in America; that is possible, but very far from certain. The second is to give to American institutions that status in universities and similar adult education bodies which enables us to multiply the present little handful of Englishmen who, at present, can teach and write about these matters with competence, into a really adequate organisation to the members of which their work can offer the prospect of a reasonable livelihood. At present, outside four British universities, no proper opportunity exists for its study; and, at the level of first-rate insight, I venture to doubt whether there are a score of teachers in the field who could exchange ideas about it as Americans would exchange ideas on English history in the most learned circles in this country.

Professors Commager and Nevins would, I am sure, be the first to admit all this, even to agree that not a few of their special emphases are the outcome of their own special studies. I think, for instance, that it would be more difficult to find greatness in Grosvenor Cleveland on this side of the Atlantic than on the other; and if Hamilton Fish conducted the international relations of Grant's government "with conspicuous integrity and success," one is tempted to remark that any integrity in the Grant era was conspicuous, and that the matters on which he was successful were surely either difficult or of the first importance. In perspective, it is not easy to see that Theodore Roosevelt was much more than verbal vehemence; his record on the trusts, for example, is a lesser achievement than that even of the conservative Taft. The really significant problem that America poses for the next age of history is whether a plutocracy more powerful than the world has ever previously seen can be schooled to accept the assumptions of a political democracy when these so deeply contradict its own lust for power. The New Deal has not yet made it possible to answer the question with confidence; and it gives no ground for supposing that the large business interests are likely to be seriously concerned with democracy except on their own terms; for men like ex-Ambassador Kennedy, for instance, democracy means *laissez-faire* in economic life and that party system which makes the support of a wealthy Irish Catholic from Boston of real importance to a democratic aspirant to the Presidency. It is going to be a matter of considerable importance for the future of American politics if public service at Washington continues to be more attractive to a young lawyer or economist or engineer than the old avenues of the past, and hardly less so if the State Department is compounded of an amalgam of scions of wealthy families and career men in considerable part trained in that curious outpost of the Vatican which is called Georgetown University. The America of Washington, the Adamses, and Jefferson could not build foundations capable of preventing the "irresistible conflict." And it is still an open question whether the America of Franklin Roosevelt, which has been given by its President the greatest lesson in adult education of modern times will be able to halt in time the drive of those forces of monopoly capitalism which will try, behind the shadow figures of men like Governor Dewey, of New York, or Governor Bricker, of Ohio, to

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VAO

Stone Men of Malekula. By JOHN LAYARD. *Chatto and Windus.* 50*s.*

This book is in every sense immense: 800 pages of detailed factual observation, 90 text figures and 10 maps, splendid photographs, on the one hand; a vivid, exact, elaborate insight and wealth of anthropological detail on the other. Mr. Layard, ably assisted by Messrs. Chatto and Windus, has produced an unmistakable classic. It is open to only one criticism—that its title suggests a study of the remarkable, still-cannibal people of Malekula, second largest island in the New Hebrides Group of the Western Pacific. The present volume is, in fact, confined to the small and comparatively "civilised" island of Vao, off the North-east of Malekula. This is a little point about a big book; anthropologists should be exact.

Mr. Layard's work, although undertaken during the last war and only now seeing publication (other volumes are to follow) will surely take its place among the foremost contemporary studies in social science. There are three reasons for this. First, Layard lived truly among the people. He entered deeply into their ways and moods, learned their language, their songs, dances and magics. He got down to the roots of the culture; most anthropologists fail to penetrate through to the inner hope and fear patterns underlying economic, social and ritual methods, customs, taboos and beliefs. Mr. Layard has cleverly linked this very elaborate culture to the theme of ambition, affinity and kinship, anticipation of death and "the journey of the dead."

Second, he places before us nearly *all* the evidence. No one has before presented so much anthropological data on a single group, so completely and so coherently. This is the author's main achievement, made possible, perhaps, by nearly thirty years of incubation, which few others have dared to allow themselves. The material greatly gains in consequence. The reader is in almost as good a position as the author to draw conclusions from the evidence. It is possible to disagree with his theories (as I do on several main points) without disagreeing with 95 per cent. of his text. He localises the theorising, and presents the facts, while suggesting the wider implications, which are certainly numerous. He thus avoids those partisan treatments (functionalism *versus* diffusionism, etc.) which have lately marred and even distorted a good deal of anthropology.

Third (and most important to the ordinary reader) the subject matter itself is fascinating. The intricacy, energy and intelligence in the culture of this island's 250 acres and 400 inhabitants seems almost unbelievable, though Mr. Layard's picture is fully supported by the independent accounts of more casual visitors. The graded society and group advancement *via* circle tusk pigs, killed with a complex monolithic sacrificial apparatus; beautiful dances, big feasts; the ritual canoe journey linked to sex initiation; strange mortuary rites and the curious continuous sand-tracings which play so important a part in their ideology; these and many other features of Vao life are dealt with in detail in this tremendous tome, making a primary contribution to our knowledge of human beings. It is out of the question for the reviewer to try to summarise such material adequately. Incidentally, *Stone Men of Malekula* must lead any thinking person to think again on the progress of our own society, our automatic assumption that "native races" are inferior and simple-minded. The people of Vao are as difficult-minded as any on earth.

This book provides an exact picture of how a "primitive" civilisation works, thinks and persists, with its own tensions, weakness, stupidities, wisdoms and strengths, in these days of chaos for our own style of living. For although Vao, even when I was there eight years ago, has changed and become considerably more "civilised" since Mr. Layard's day, his account is still fundamentally exact, after a quarter of a century.

TOM HARRISSON

NEW NOVELS

The Fall of Paris. By ILYA EHRENBURG. *Hutchinson.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

To Be a Pilgrim. By JOYCE CARY. *Michael Joseph.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Contemporary events are as alluring to the novelist as grapes within easy reach of his hand. To have been at Madrid or Singapore or Dunkirk involves an almost irresistible temptation to make each tragic event the background of a new novel—and quickly, before the vivid impression fades. But though these grapes are accessible, they are usually sour. They must mature for years before the dusty bottle can profitably be brought up from the cellar. The last ten years have produced a spate of such undigested novels, as topical as they have proved ephemeral. An eminent knight would even add stop-press footnotes to his latest novel. Yet Tolstoy's war was not the Crimea; but Austerlitz and 1812. Stendhal waited twenty years for Waterloo and Metternich's Italy to mature.

Ehrenburg, a Soviet journalist of high and deserved reputation, wrote *The Fall of Paris* between August, 1940, and July, 1941, in the eleven months which immediately followed the events which he describes. He has seized his sour fruit with almost indecent haste, and the result is quite as unpalatable as one would expect. The novel opens in the months immediately preceding the Popular Front elections, and ends with the setting up of the Vichy regime. The bones are political events, a hurried sequence of political events which become rapidly more confusing as the book progresses. There is a bewildering lack of perspective, and the final impression is of an infrared photograph in which all true distances are lost by compression. *The Fall of Paris* is a historical novel, far more so than either *War and Peace* or *La Chartreuse de Parme*. The author's intention is not to create characters or to explore emotions, but to interpret political events. This makes it a thousand times more important to wait, to forget the irrelevant detail, and to allow time for the true perspective to emerge. A journalist's account should indeed be up-to-date, but at best a journalist's account is only likely to survive as valuable first-hand information for historians of the future. Here no claim is made to ultimate understanding. But a novel suffers gravely from the absence of perspective, and often loses the very virtues of good journalism. Ehrenburg's pre-war reports of Western Europe were spirited and acute. During the last year his vivid accounts of the Soviet front have made him widely known and respected in this country. But even the lively qualities of his journalism only rarely emerge in the novel.

These criticisms apply to most premature historical novelists. Ehrenburg's second great weakness partly springs from the first. Most people who witness a great national upheaval are to some degree involved in it, to some degree partisans. In Ehrenburg's case the partisanship is narrow and fanatical. Great novels have been written on the inspiration of freedom, of patriotism, of religious faith. No great novel has ever been written to conform to a party line, nor is it possible to envisage it. It is a Marxist truism that every writer is limited by his environment, that nobody can write in a vacuum of pure objectivity. But every reputable novelist is at pains to reduce his limitations, to encourage his perception, to see things, so far as he may, as they really are. It is this hunger for truth which makes a writer reputable, and it is his degree of success in finding it which makes him great or less great. But a novel which is grafted to a party line is like a jigsaw puzzle, and no more creative. The pieces all fit into a preordained picture, and the only task is to make sure that each is in its right place. Nearly every character in *The Fall of Paris* is a dummy, for there is hardly one who fails to develop according to the supposed development of his political type. The Socialists become pusillanimous Conservatives, the Radicals become Fascists, and the Fascists become traitors. The Communists are saints, and for them no development is possible. No real service is done to the French Communists by making them such paragons of revolutionary virtue. The intention is presumably that they alone should stand out from the prevailing chaos and corruption. In fact, they are hardly distinguishable from the other figures, since all share the same sawdust composition. The tragedy of the Communist Party was its political debacle in the first sixteen months of the war, fit subject for a novel of doubt and torment. But Ehrenburg is evidently embarrassed by the volte-face of September, 1939, for he says as little as possible about it.

It is significant that recent Soviet literature written inside and about the Soviet Union is almost entirely free from the faults of political orthodoxy. In Russia the party line is taken for granted; it is accepted as democracy is accepted here. There is no longer any need for every writer to harp and batter at it. But when the party line is exported to a country where it was defeated, fanaticism flares up uncomfortably again. Nor is the book any better as a description of France and Frenchmen than as a novel. The rich all move in an atmosphere of vintage claret, oysters and *petites danseuses*; the poor in berets and strikes and demonstrations. The result is exotic and quite unfamiliar. And these synthetic characters find a subtle revenge on the political events which take such arrogant precedence over them. For since the people are unreal the events themselves are tainted with the same unreality. If Ehrenburg had written a straightforward political account of the fall of France he would have produced a stimulating and provocative book. Though what he has done may fascinate many readers, I think for my part that he was ill-advised to use the form of a novel.

It would be unfair to make any generalisation on British and Soviet art from the two books under review. Mr. Cary is a novelist of experience and distinction, while Ehrenburg is primarily a journalist. The true contrast is between the author who has made a life-work of novel-writing and the journalist whose interests lie in quite a different field. Few living English writers could better illustrate the specialist vocation of the novelist than Joyce Cary. Though in some respects *To be a Pilgrim* is a less brilliant book than *The African Witch*, the new novel represents an unmistakable advance. Mr. Cary's distinction is that of a hard-working talent, wholeheartedly devoted to increasing both its scope and its profundity. As another reviewer once pointed out, this is a French rather than an English distinction. In England popular opinion will allow only two categories of novelist, the genius and the best-seller. Mr. Cary is neither, but his devotion has made him one of the best living English novelists.

In *To be a Pilgrim* he has made a subtle exploration into time. An old man's reminiscences are skilfully woven into his gloomy present. Tom Wilcher, a little cracked at seventy, has returned to the house of his childhood under the supervision of a niece. This house evokes the memories which fill the book until past and present merge in death. For the most part the people in this book are unremarkable—soldiers,

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lawyers, squires and fashionable Edwardian Londoners. Yet nearly all the characters are treated with a careful and analytical attention which makes them both alive and deeply interesting. Where Cary fails with his characters—both the flapper of 1925 and the decaying Edwardian actress are failures—the impression is not of vulgarity, but of a simple limitation of scope. No novel could be more free from preconceptions or propaganda. Although the whole book is written in the first person, seen through the eyes of a septuagenarian, charming doubts are constantly thrown on his understanding. His tirades against the young are intentionally only half-convincing, and at times he shows a startling perception of his own bewilderment. "We can understand new ideas in the world, but we cannot share new feelings." A nail hit beautifully on the head.

It is odd that the greatest weakness of this book should be precisely the one to which Soviet writers are most allergic. Every pilgrim in the novel falters on his pilgrimage; not one reaches his goal. Tom Wilcher is a failure, and so, in a rich variety of failure, is everyone else. The politician fails in politics, the soldier dies undistinguished and bewildered, the bold sister dies in a rage of frustration. Nor do the younger generation fare any better. In a novel of so wide a scope this is clearly a weakness, for the picture which emerges is incomplete. The atmosphere of failure hangs heavier and heavier, intensified by death. It is not, God forbid! a message that is lacking, but an all-round view. Yet in each of the principal characters failure is truly inherent, and works itself out with that inevitability which is the highest criterion of reality. If the whole picture is somewhat distorted, nearly every strand of the story is individually convincing. In the desert of modern English fiction Joyce Cary is a precious oasis. PHILIP TOYNBEE

Sub-Lieutenant. By LUDOVIC KENNEDY. *Batsford.* 7s. 6d.

The Royal Navy has been regrettably less articulate than the R.A.F., so that this small book is particularly welcome. The author, a sailor's son, begins with a few brisk pages about his prep. school, Eton and Oxford, which at once interest us in his character. At the end of the book, after reading his accounts of the Lofoten and Spitzbergen expeditions, of the sinking of the *Bismarck*, and of his father's death on the *Rawalpindi* (which he commanded), we are still chiefly interested in the narrator himself. Candid, unpretentious, admirably spirited, he unconsciously paints a most engaging self-portrait. The power to write with such directness is rare, and the best intentioned men, if inexperienced with the pen, are apt to fall into *clichés* and vulgarities of phrase that misrepresent their characters. Lieutenant Kenndy wonderfully escapes all such mishaps. His style is as sharp and pleasing as the photographs that illustrate his narrative.

Week-end Competitions

No. 675

Set by Raymond Mortimer

A Mr. Donald Wells of Shrewsbury has proclaimed in the *Daily Telegraph*: "If Rome were gutted to-morrow the post-war world would not be one iota the poorer." Prizes amounting to four guineas are offered for the best epigrams inspired by this remark.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, January 18th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 672

Set by G. W. Stonier

The usual prizes are offered for the best account, in not more than 150 words, of a depressing Christmas.

Report by G. W. Stonier

Here and there the spirit of depression has hovered atrociously. "Almost as soon as I arrived, Mrs. Broad switched on the radio, and finding there was a talk on, turned it off, and with her eyes half-closed because of smoke from her cigarette, put on their super automatic 20-record player" (J. A. Richards). "Woken at 4 a.m. by landlady's little girl shouting across landing: 'Mum, why hasn't Santa come yet?'" (Stanley J. Sharpless). "So we all sat round and listened to the B.B.C. Christmas" (J.R.). "Thank you once more, Auntie, and we all think you managed wonderfully. The spam with bread sauce was delicious, and who would have guessed it was carrots in the pudding?" (S. Atkinson). "Carols by Reginald Foort, and so to bed" (Desmond Cooper). But it isn't so easy, having struck a low level, to keep to it. The Christmas days spent in hospitals and military outposts were the most horrific; brightness invaded even the isolation ward. Most people seem to have been plagued by the wireless, bad cooking, lumpy beds, Consequences, indigestion, and the brisk walk that cures everything. The catalogue of these miseries was too often in itself merely depressing. I recommend that the prize money be divided as follows: two guineas to Michael Barsley; one guinea to Michael Ingrams; and half a guinea each to Richard Pomfret and Anthony Elkan.

Last-minute shoppers dart for scraps like hens in a barnyard; *the creature hath a purpose and its eyes are bright with it.* Now the orgiastic spending's over: drink up ere you repent. During my 24 hours' Christmas duty, the little boat is pushed out over the waters of Watney. The humble Woodbine becomes a Whiff; wet coins lie on the counter; the eye is glad and glassy, and the General quotes Tiny Tim over a hoarse pub radio. Christ is born again in Dingley Dell, but there's still no room for Him at the inn. His message, poverty and charity, isn't included in the News, which is about the Russians and the inappropriate assassination. At Communion my neighbour gives me a sidesman's smile: numbers up on last year: perhaps the good news from the Middle East. Back on the station we await half-forgotten raids. It's a depressing Christmas. (MICHAEL BARSLEY)

. . . and I *did* ask for a new doll with eyes that close and clothes that take off all the way and for a motor-car that winds up so that Tommy can't always say that all girls think about are dolls but I didn't mind that because I'm stronger than Tommy but when Daddy gave me a post-card with silly stamps all over it and told me I'd thank him for it when I was a big girl I cried and he said I was a spoilt little minx and took after Mummy and Mummy who didn't like the sheets he'd given her because they were her coupons and she wanted perfume said nasty things to him and I was sent to my room and here I am now and I don't think I like Christmas a little bit and I can hear Mummy and Daddy talking quite plainly so I know they're saying nasty things to each other . . .

(MICHAEL INGRAMS)
CHRISTMAS, 1940.
(RICHARD POMFRET)

I read the description of Stephen Dedalus's Christmas in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.*
(ANTHONY ELKAN)

* * *

Will Gordon Simpson, prizewinner on Dec. 12, and "Fouché" (Dec. 26), please send their addresses?

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